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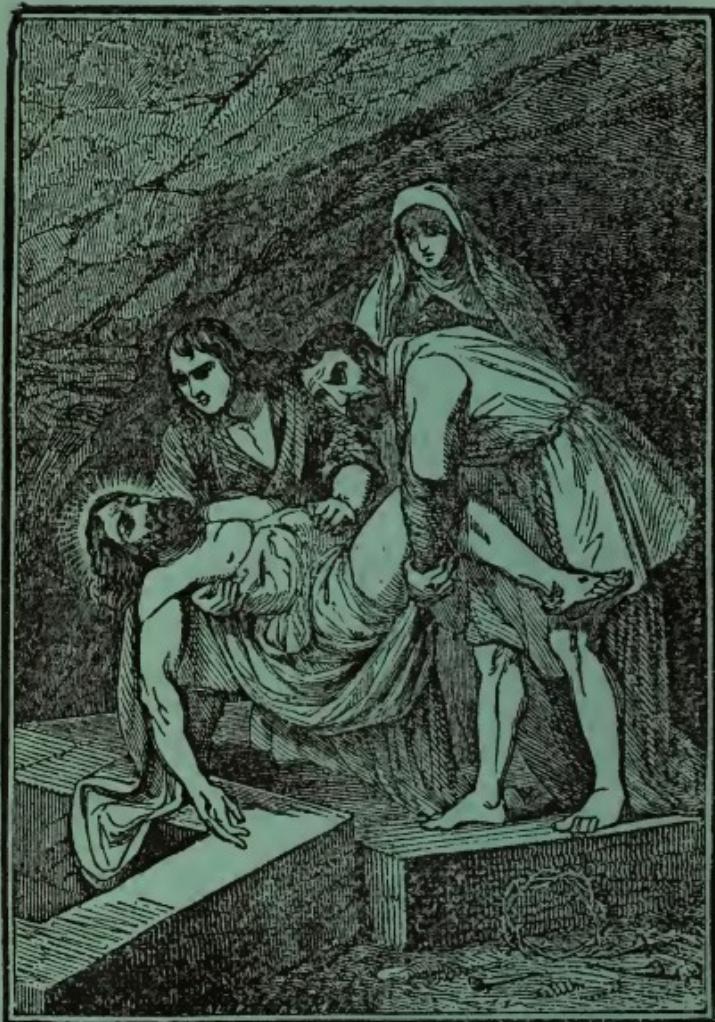
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Rosary of the B. V. Mary.

“ SINGULARE adversus hœreses ac vitia prœsidium (*Ecclesia*) Rosarium est augmentum Christianorum (*Urban VIII.*), purgatio tenebrarum hœresiæ (*St. Pius V.*), œrarium gratiarum (*Paul V.*), un très-utile maniere de prier, quand on ne sait bien dire (*St. François de Sales*).

THE Rosary is a special safeguard against heresy and vice (*The Church*), the increase of Christians (*Urban VIII.*), it banishes the darkness of heresy (*St. Pius V.*), the treasury of graces (*Pope Paul V.*), a most profitable form of prayer, if you know how to say it well (*St. Francis de Sales*).

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FOURTEENTH STATION.

THE ROSARY
OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY,

WITH A FULL EXPLANATION OF

The Prayers and Meditations

THAT COMPOSE IT,

AND THE INDULGENCES ATTACHED TO IT.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

AN APPENDIX ON THE INSTITUTION AND RULE OF
THE "THIRD ORDER" OF ST. DOMINICK.

BY

THE REV. JOHN RYAN, D.D.

Permissu Superiorum.

DUBLIN:

JOHN MULLANY, 1, PARLIAMENT-STREET.
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P R E F A C E.

OF the many forms of devotion which Catholic piety has invented to honour the ever blessed Mother of God, the most simple and beautiful, and, indeed, the favourite devotion with all the faithful, is that of the Holy Rosary. Though sufficiently plain and easy, so as to be understood by the simplest peasant, it contains at the same time a depth of mystery, a sublimity and grandeur, which the most gifted intellect cannot fully comprehend. The Rosary is the prayer by excellence, the queen of all prayers and devotions, as it has been truly called,* an inexhaustible source of spiritual graces and treasures. Like a crown of lovely roses, interwoven with the fairest and choicest flowers of Christian piety,† which the devout clients of Mary offer at the feet of their mother and queen, it combines all that is most efficacious

* *Regina precum et thesaurus gratiarum* (Blessed Alan de La Roche). "The queen of indulged devotions" (Faber).

† *Dum multæ conjungantur precatio[n]es Dominicae, et salutatio[n]es Angelicae, corona texitur, qua coronata incedit Regina Mundi* (Blessed Albertus, M.).

in prayer, most holy in faith, most tender in religion. It has been the most cherished and popular devotion amongst the faithful, and has come down to us as well honoured by the praises as recommended by the practice of the saints and pious Catholics of every age since its first institution. The Rosary is in a manner to the faithful at large what the Divine Office is to the clergy—the beads are, as it were, the breviary from which the poor especially and the ignorant, who can read no other book, daily recite the praises of their divine Lord and His Virgin Mother. The Rosary is, in fact, the Gospel abridged, being a brief history of our divine Saviour's life and passion and glorious victory over death, as well as the part which his blessed Mother bore in them; these great mysteries it presents to the mind with all the vividness of a picture, constantly keeping before us the goodness, love, and mercy which Jesus and Mary have shown us in the great work of our redemption. “It ought certainly to be the principal object of the devotion of every Christian,* always to bear in mind these holy mysteries, to return to God a perpetual homage of love, praise, and thanksgiving for them, to make them the subject of his assiduous meditation, to mould his affections, regulate his life, and form his spirit by the holy impressions

* Butler.

which they make on his soul. The Rosary is a method of doing this, most easy in itself, . . . and at the same time most sublime and faithful in the exercise of the highest acts of prayer, contemplation, and all interior virtues. These are admirably comprised in the divine prayer which our divine Lord himself vouchsafed to teach us, which pious persons, who penetrate the spirit of each word in those holy petitions, can never grow weary of repeating, but must recite every time with new fervour, and with more ardent sentiments of love and piety."

The Rosary is a mixed devotion, combining vocal prayer and meditation, and in both respects merits our highest esteem and affection. The prayers that compose it are the most perfect, the mysteries it proposes for reflection the most august and adorable in our holy religion. As a vocal prayer, it is distributed into fifteen decades, each consisting of one *Our Father*, ten *Hail Marys*,* and one *Glory be to the Father*. Now these prayers are the most excellent in the Church, as ancient as the Church itself, practised by the

* Hence the name *decade*, which means *ten*; the repetition of 150 (15 decades) *Angelic Salutations* was instituted by St. Dominic, in imitation of the 150 Psalms of David; hence the Rosary is sometimes called the *Psalter of Mary* (Spinelli).

apostles and the early Christians with that great fervour which distinguished the ages of faith, and by them handed down to us. The *Our Father*, which is the prayer of prayers, and model of all prayers, was taught us by our divine Lord and Master, being, as it were, the memorial which he has indited with his own lips, and drawn up for us with his own hands, in which we are to present our petitions to the Father. If he has pledged his solemn word that “whatever we ask the Father in *His* name will be given to us” (John, xvi. 16), how far more confident may we be of obtaining our requests when we present them, not alone in his name, but in his own very words, which he has put into our mouths as if to prevent the possibility of refusal. Besides, this heavenly prayer contains all that we can desire or hope for ourselves, or for others, for soul or body, for time or eternity. Though concise, yet all-comprehensive, being the compendium of divine worship, the very essence of Christianity. Though few in words, it contains the very sum and substance of every other devout prayer; so that, as St. Augustine says, the prayer whose words cannot be referred to this, is carnal and unlawful. “The Lord’s Prayer,” says Thomas à-Kempis, “far excels all the longing desires and aspirations of the saints, for it contains in itself most fully all the sayings of the prophets,

all the mellifluous words of the Psalms and Canticles ; it asks all that is necessary, gives God the highest praise, unites the soul with its Creator, elevates it from earth to heaven, pierces the clouds, and ascends above the angels. Blessed is he who ponders attentively each of these words of Christ."

Next in dignity, as well as in the estimation and familiar use of all good Christians, is the *Hail Mary*, the glorious salutation with which the archangel greeted her on the part of the Blessed Trinity, who sent him as their ambassador to congratulate this humble Virgin on her being chosen the instrument of man's salvation. These words were the first signal given on earth of that mystery which brought "glory to God on high," and peace to men of good will on earth," and as our redemption commenced with this heavenly salutation, so does it depend in a particular manner on its devout recital. The *Hail Mary* is the prayer of every class, and age, and sex—from the child that lisps it in its mother's arms to the aged parent weighed down by infirmity. It is the prayer of just souls, who receive in turn so many graces and favours from Mary as the reward of repeating it. It is the prayer of sinners too, who, when crime seems to blot out the memory of every other, still retain this. Amidst the wreck of religious duties and pious practices, this seems the last plank left to bring

them, as it often does, to the shore of penance and divine grace. To use the words of a saint : “ The *Ave Maria* said well is the enemy that puts Satan to flight ; it is the sanctification of the soul, the joy of angels, the melody of the predestined, the canticle of the New Testament, the joy of Mary, the glory of the holy Trinity. It is a heavenly dew that fertilizes the soul, a vermillion rose, a precious gem presented to Mary. In fine, it is the most magnificent eulogy that can be pronounced in her honour ; the secret attractions with which it abounds, so charm her heart as to constrain her to love him that recites it well.”*

The concluding prayer in each decade is the *Glory be to the Father*, called the doxology, being, as it were, the seal of the divine mystery of the Trinity, as the *Hail Mary* is of the Incarnation. This divine prayer is an act of supreme adoration and homage to the Blessed Trinity, whereby we offer up to God all the praise and glory which were given him at the beginning of creation, which have been given him ever since, and which will be given him by the blessed for all eternity. Each decade ends with this prayer to show that the whole is offered up to the glory of God, who alone is the supreme end and object

* From the “Mese di Maggio secondo lo Spirito di S. Francesco di Sales,” Torino, 1865.

of all religious worship. It contains a most lively profession of faith in the three Divine Persons, and unites us with the blessed in praise and thanksgiving to *each*, for what they have done for our salvation. We read of St. Francis of Assisi that this prayer made a most lively impression on his heart. Once he repeated it, in thanks to God for his bounty, after each verse of the *Magnificat*, and he exhorts all to say it frequently.* As to the portion of the Rosary which consists in mental prayer, and constitutes the soul and spirit, as it were, of this exercise, St. Augustine writes : " Nothing is so salutary as to meditate daily on all that the Man-God has suffered for us." " Oh, amiable passion," cries St. Bonaventure, " which renders him that meditates it divine." The same is equally true of all the mysteries of our redemption, for each is a fresh proof of the great love our blessed Saviour has shown us. Hence the Church declares that as the " Only begotten Son of God, by his life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, so the fruit of our meditating on these mysteries in the most holy Rosary of the Virgin Mary is, that we imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise ;† and again, that by

* Oratorian Life, vol. ii. p. 271.

† Prayer in the Mass for 1st Sunday of October (*Feast of the Most Holy Rosary*).

these mysteries we call to mind the life, passion, and glory of Christ, so as to be made worthy of his promises, to be aided by the prayers of his most holy Mother, and receive the virtue of the mysteries we meditate on.* Pope St. Pius V. says, “that the faithful being inflamed by these meditations and prayers began to be changed into other men ; the darkness of heresy began to vanish, and the light of the Catholic faith to shine forth with greater brightness.”† From all which we may easily infer the utility of the Rosary, whether we regard it as a vocal or mental prayer.

But its special excellence, and that which renders it so far superior to every other form of devotion, is the admirable union of meditation and prayer in a manner so perfect, that each, far from interrupting, mutually assists the other. “This is its secret charm,” says a learned writer;‡ “it simplifies while it divides. It is a unity while it is a variety as well. It parts our Lord into the joys, the sorrows, and the glories of his Mother, and five times subdivides each of those three devotions ; and yet it is all the one Jesus as Mary saw him—Mary’s Jesus, Mary’s view of him, love of him, and worship of him, which the complete

* Prayer in the Mass for 1st Sunday of October—secret and post-communion,

† *Consueverunt* (27th September, 1569).

‡ Faber.

Rosary brings before us." The same writer sums up all that might be said in praise of it, in those words : " First, consider its importance as a specially Catholic devotion, as so peculiarly giving us a Catholic turn of mind by keeping Jesus and Mary perpetually before us, and as a singular help to final perseverance if we continue the recital of it, as various revelations show. Next, consider its institution by St. Dominick, in 1214, by revelation, for the purpose of combating heresy, and the success which attended it. Its matter and form are not less striking. Its matter consists of the *Pater*, the *Ave*, and the *Gloria Patri*, whose authors are our blessed Lord himself, St. Gabriel, St. Elizabeth, the council of Ephesus, and the whole Church led in the west by St. Damasus. Its form is a complete abridgment of the gospel, consisting of fifteen mysteries in decades, expressing the three great phases in the work of redemption—joy, sorrow, and glory. Its peculiarity is the next attractive feature about it. It unites mental with vocal prayer. It is a devotional compendium of theology. It is an efficacious practice of the presence of God. It is one chief channel of the traditions of the incarnation among the faithful. It shows the true nature of devotion to our Blessed Lady, and is a means of realizing the communion of saints. Its ends

are the love of Jesus, reparation to the Sacred Humanity for the outrages of heresy, and a continual affectionate thanksgiving to the most holy Trinity, for the benefit of the incarnation. It is sanctioned by the Church, by indulgences, by miracles, by the conversion of sinners, and by the usage of the saints. See also how much the method of reciting it involves. We should first make a picture of the mystery, and always put our Blessed Lady into the picture, for the Rosary is hers. We should couple some duty or virtue with each mystery ; and fix beforehand on some soul in purgatory to whom to apply the vast indulgences. Meanwhile we must not strain our minds, or be scrupulous ; for to say the Rosary well is quite a thing which requires learning. Remember always, as the Raccolta teaches, “that the fifteenth mystery is the coronation of Mary, and not merely the glory of the saints. Our beads land us and leave us at the feet of Mary crowned.” (*Growth of Holiness*).

Many admirable little works have been already composed on the Rosary, even in our own language ; nor is the present intended to supersede or displace them, though its plan is different from any which the writer has seen. The Rosary is a subject which most persons think might be sufficiently treated of in a few pages ; but though this

may appear true at first sight, yet a little reflection will easily convince us of the contrary. The Rosary, being a mixed devotion (as was said above), comprises a variety of subjects : the following suggest themselves as naturally arising out of it, when properly treated of—a full explanation of the *Lord's Prayer* and the *Hail Mary*, with the nature of true devotion to the Blessed Virgin ; it seemed likewise necessary to say something on prayer and meditation in general, and on the *Holy names of Jesus and Mary*, which recur so frequently in each decade of the Rosary ; finally, owing to the almost numberless (*pene innumeræ**) indulgences which the Church grants to those who devoutly recite it, before laying down the special indulgences granted by the Holy See, it was deemed useful to premise a brief explanation on the nature of indulgences, and the manner of acquiring and applying them.

It may be well to add, that the object of this little work is to prove useful rather than to appear original. No small pains, however, were bestowed in translating literally and faithfully the several passages quoted. Special attention was paid to the explanation of the *Our Father* and *Hail Mary*, the proper understanding of which is alike necessary and useful for all good Christians. On this account it is

* Office of the Rosary.

I hoped that the paraphrase of St. Francis d'Assisi on the Lord's Prayer, and that of the devout à-Kempis on the Angelical Salutation, will prove acceptable to the pious reader, as also the meditations of the Ven. Fr. de Ponte, which have been highly esteemed for their piety and learning in a society equally eminent for both. For the rest, it is the writer's ardent desire that these few pages may assist in promoting a devotion the faithful practice of which was always looked on as a sign of predestination, and a sure pledge to the clients of Mary that in return for this *crown of roses* which they offer to her on earth, they shall receive an unfading crown of glory from her Son in heaven.

ORIGIN AND HISTORY
OF
THE HOLY ROSARY.

CHAPTER I.

The Nature and History of the Rosary.

THE history and nature of the Rosary are described by the Church in the office* for the first Sunday of October (feast of the Holy Rosary) in the following words : “ When the impious heresy of the Albigenses was laying waste the country about Toulouse, and casting deeper root every day, St. Dominick, who had lately founded the Order of Preachers, applied himself with all his energies to uproot it ; and in order to effect this end the more securely, he implored by the most earnest prayer the aid of the Blessed Virgin, whose dignity was infamously assailed by their errors, it being her privilege to crush every heresy throughout the entire world. Admonished by her (as is handed down to memory) that he should preach the Rosary to the people, as a *singular protection against heresy and vice* of all kind, it is wonderful with what fervour of spirit he fulfilled the duty imposed on him, and with what happy results his labours were crowned. Now the Rosary

* 2nd Nocturn.

is a certain form of prayer, in which we recite fifteen decades of the Angelic Salutation, the Lord's Prayer being added to each decade, whilst at the same time we call to mind in pious meditation as many mysteries of our divine redemption. From that time forward this pious form of prayer began to spread far and wide, and was propagated in the most wonderful manner through the means of St. Dominic, whom the supreme Pontiffs by their letters apostolic have always declared to be its author and institutor. Almost incredible fruits were produced by so salutary an institution throughout the entire Christian world; amongst others the celebrated victory which the most holy Pontiff Pius V., and with him the Christian princes, gained over the Turks near the Ionian islands. For as the victory was won on the same day that the Sodalities of the Most Holy Rosary were offering up their united prayers and supplications over the whole world for this end, it is not undeservedly attributed to them. The same was also confirmed by Gregory XIII., who ordered an office to be celebrated perpetually in all the churches where there was an altar of the Rosary, in thanksgiving to the Blessed Virgin for her singular protection. . . . We should, therefore, continually honour the holy Mother of God, by this form of prayer which is most pleasing to her, in order that she who so often enabled the faithful of Christ to triumph over their enemies on earth, when they prayed to her in the Rosary, may obtain for us also the victory over our infernal enemies."

CHAPTER II.

The origin and spirit of the Rosary.

THE origin and spirit of this holy devotion are beautifully described by the eloquent Lacordaire in his life of St. Dominick : "The war (waged by the Albigenses) seemed to place an insurmountable difficulty in the way of Dominick's fixed design—namely, to found a religious order which should be devoted to the ministry of preaching. Accordingly he never ceased to implore of God the establishment of peace. It was for this end, and in order to hasten the triumph of the faith, that he instituted, not without a secret inspiration, a form of prayer which afterwards spread throughout the entire Church, under the name of the 'Rosary.' When the Archangel Gabriel was sent to the Virgin Mary to announce to her the Incarnation of the Son of God in her chaste womb, he saluted her in these words : 'Hail (Mary), full of grace, the Lord is with thee ; blessed art thou amongst women.' These words, the most glorious that creature ever heard, have been repeated from age to age from the lips of Christians ; and from the depth of this valley of tears, they never cease to address the Mother of the Saviour, 'Hail, Mary.' The heavenly hierachies had deputed one of their princes to the humble daughter of David, to address to her this glorious salutation ; and now that she is seated above the angels, whose daughter and sister she was, they send up to her, from this world below, the angel's salutation, 'Hail, Mary.' When she heard it the first time from the mouth of Gabriel, she immediately con-

ceived the Word of God in her most chaste womb ; and now, each time that a human mouth repeats those words, which were the signal of her maternity, her heart is moved at the remembrance of a moment, the like of which was never seen in heaven or on earth ; and all eternity is filled with the happiness that it brought her. Now, though Christians were always accustomed to turn their hearts in this way to Mary, yet the use immemo-rial of this devotion had no fixed rule or solemnity in it. The faithful did not assemble together to address their beloved protectress ; each followed the bent of his own private devotion. St. Dominick, who was not ignorant of the power of association in prayer, believed it would be useful to apply it to the angelic salutation, and that this common cry of an entire people gatherd together would ascend to heaven with great authority. The brevity even of the angel's words required that they should be repeated a certain number of times, like the unvarying acclamations with which the gratitude of nations hails the approach of sovereigns. But as repetition might produce distraction of mind, Dominick provided against this by distributing the oral salutations into several series. To each he attached the meditation of one of the mysteries of our redemption, which were to the Blessed Virgin the subject in turn of joy, of sorrow, and of triumph. In this manner *private meditation* was united with *public prayer*, and the people, while saluting their Mother and Queen, accompanied her in the depth of their hearts through each of the principal events of her life. Dominick formed a confraternity the better

to insure the continuance of this solemn manner of supplication. The pious thought was blessed with the greatest of all success—success amongst the people. The faithful people of Christ have clung to it from age to age with incredible fidelity. The confraternites of the Rosary have been multiplied indefinitely. There is scarcely a Christian over the world who does not possess a part of the Rosary under the name of *Chaplet*. Who is it that has not heard in the country churches, in the evening, the devout voices of the peasants reciting the angelic salutation in two separate bodies? Who has not met with processions of pilgrims counting the beads between their fingers, beguiling the tediousness of the way by repeating alternately the name of Mary? Such is the *origin*, and such the *spirit* of the devotion of the Rosary, whereof but too many Catholics have yet to learn the *native grandeur* and *profound simplicity*. Whenever anything becomes perpetual and universal, it necessarily embodies a mysterious harmony with the wants and the destinies of man. The Rationalist smiles with pity, when he sees crowds of people pass by repeating the same words; but he who is enlightened with the clearer light of faith, knows that love has but one word, which, however, often pronounced seems no repetition.”*

* *Vie de St. Dominique*, c. vi.

CHAPTER III.

The Object and Practice of the Rosary.*

A GREAT principle of Catholic devotion is the endeavouring to feel as we should have done amidst the scenes which excite it. The Church in her public offices suggests this idea; she takes us successively to all the great events in the history of our redemption, puts us vividly into them, presents us to the actors, and instils into us their feelings. We need not enter further into this view, because it is probably not new to any of our readers, and it belongs rather to another subject. But we may observe, that the grand charm—nay, the essential power of St. Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*—that treasure of spirituality, that storehouse of devotion that none can rival—consists in the vivid apprehension of the mysteries of God, which the very senses are made, in some sort, to serve. We are told by Goëthe that he trained himself to look at objects with the eye of the great artists, so that in a group he could discern what characteristics Raffaelle, or Guercino, or Michael Angelo, would respectively have seized; and a landscape he would contemplate as Claude, or Salvator Rosa, or Poussin would have done, each drawing from it a different picture, though all true representations. And so surely, if one wish to contemplate the tender scene of our Lord's nativity, one would gaze upon it with the eyes of those poor but happy shepherds who witnessed it, and

Vols. * From an article by Cardinal Wiseman, in the *Dublin Review*, April, 1843.

August
1843

try to feel and adore, humbly and lovingly, as they must have done ; or one may approach it in the train of the eastern kings, and, with more distant veneration, offer up such gifts as God has granted us. Again, if we go up in devotion to Calvary, we may place ourselves in many different positions and aspects ; we may look upon the cross from the gibbet of the penitent thief, or we may think of Magdalene, and gaze through her tearful eyes, and feel love, not unmixed with remorse, and, perhaps, with indignation too, against the authors of all this woe (alas ! ourselves) ; or we may stand with John, love predominating over every passion, noting diligently with the evangelical eagle's ken, every minute detail of sorrow, and every marvellous mystery of charity. And after the glad third day, when he is risen again, we may find many ways in taking part in so joyful an event ; it may be shame and sorrow-stricken like poor Peter, or with spouse-like eagerness, as Mary addressed the supposed gardener. But surely there is *One*, who had a share in these and all other such scenes, through whose eyes we should all be glad to view them, in whose heart we should long to feel them. If in the reflection on another's soul we wish to view the occurrences—joyful, dolorous, or triumphant—through which mercy and glory were purchased for us, there is one *Mirror of Justice*, bright, spotless, untarnished, which reflects them in their full clearness and truth. Shall we not strive to look upon it ? If these events called up feelings in every spectator, in one breast alone they found depth, and breadth, and strength to do them full justice.

Shall we not watch and study its heavings and powerful throes? The maternal heart alone could contain the ocean of bitterness or the heaven of joy which these various mysteries were fitted to create. And hence the natural desire of souls to be its associate, and to stand with its venerable possessor in sight of all that she saw, in hearing of all that she heard, in observance of all that she laid up in her heart.

*Justa { Stramen
 { Crucem } tecum stare.
 Et me tibi sociare.
In { Fœno
 { Planctu } desidero.

Now this is, to our minds, exactly the object and practice of the Rosary.

CHAPTER IV.

The end proposed to us by the Church in this devotion.† THE history of our divine Saviour's life may justly be divided into four periods. The first comprises His blessed birth and childhood—bright and joyful days, no doubt, in spite of the sorrows and trials that mingled with them. The second includes the three years of His public mission. The third is short indeed, but full of mighty events, and crowded with awful, yet most affectionate recollections; it occupies but one day—a day of sadness and gloom, but a day in which more was done for man than had been accomplished in four thousand preceding years; *the day*—for which those thousands had run—of renovation of all nature, more won-

* “Stabat Mater gaudiosa,” and “Stabat Mater dolorosa.”

† Ibid.

derful than that of its first creation. Finally, the fourth is the glorious period which commenced at the resurrection and is continuing now, and will continue without end. Of these four periods, unquestionably, there is not one which is not overflowing both with instruction and with appeals to our affection. But it is clear that the second is more especially devoted to the first, the other three mainly to the last. A triple plea of love is addressed to us by them—a plea which no heart that meditates on them can resist. Now, it is during these especially that we have ever a witness present, who can better than any one convey to us the becoming feelings wherewith we should strive to contemplate them. Perhaps of our Lord's public life an apostle is the best evidence, on whose mind the wonderful teaching of the Mount opened gradually, unfolding mysteries never before heard, or whose amazed senses saw the first awakening to consciousness of the rising dead, and the glad bound of the released cripple, and the kindling glow of the cured blind man's countenance ; or we may go into the hearts of those so benefited, and, spiritually applying their case to our own, try to imitate their sentiments. But while a mother watches over the birthplace of Jesus, or follows his patient footsteps through torments to death, or exults in the triumphs which ensue, no inferior companionship, no smaller measure of feeling, no lower standard of appreciation will be preferred. This is, then, the devotion which the Church of God proposes to us in the Rosary—the contemplation of the mysteries of this threefold portion of our Redeemer's life, in

connexion and sympathy with his loving Mother's feelings in each. It is essentially directed to him ; being in fact the noblest and perfectest mode of meditating on him.

CHAPTER V.

The Communion of Saints realized and continued in the Rosary.*

THERE is still another view of it which, it strikes us, will facilitate and endear its practice to many ; and, therefore, we will venture to unfold it. The Church realizes to the utmost the communion of saints, by making the intercourse between earth and heaven as vivid as possible. The exclamations of the old Christians at the martyrs' tombs were as bold and direct as though they had been addressing the confessors in prison. And the Fathers represent them to their hearers as though present to them, defending their cities from visible enemies, and actively interesting themselves in their welfare. It is only doing in their regard what she wishes to make us do towards their Head and Lord—to give the greatest possible reality to the belief concerning them. She existed in the small apostolic college, and the handful of disciples who enjoyed our Lord's society on earth ; the pious women from Galilee, and the few like Joseph of Armathœa, formed her laity, as the others did her clergy. She increased in multitudes, but she strove to alter not in feeling. What the apostles felt towards their Master, they continued, no doubt, to feel after he was

* Ibid.

ascended—the same veneration, the same love, the same trustfulness, the same desire to imitate him. And these feelings they would leave as a legacy to their successors, who, in their turn, would continue to *them*, after they had sealed their testimony, similar attachment, similar respect. Could Polycarp fail to the end of his days communing spiritually with the beloved disciple John, by passing again and again, in holy meditation, over the many happy hours during which he had heard him recount every incident witnessed by him in his Saviour's life, and listened to the fervent acts of charity in which they were related? The same kind of communion, only more exalted and more deeply respectful, we may easily suppose to have been kept up by those who enjoyed in life the familiarity of our Blessed Lady. It has often struck us, that many who in latter times have not scrupled to use the coldest, and even disrespectful language respecting her, would shrink from the idea of acting similarly towards her had they lived in her day, and had her near. When, particularly, we have heard the indignation of fancied zeal break from female lips, against any respect being paid or devotion expressed towards her who is the peerless glory, the matchless jewel of her sex, we have been led to think, how differently the heart that gave the tongue such utterance would have felt had its compassion been claimed by the venerable matron, whose bereavement of the best of sons had been caused for its sake. Many who can speak unkindly of her in heaven, would have melted into compassion over her on earth—would have kissed with deep reverential awe the hand that had lifted from the ground and

received into a maternal embrace the same sacred body, just born and just dead—the infant and the corpse ; and would have deemed it a privilege inestimable if granted to them, to listen, low upon the ground, to her many tales of joy and sorrow—glowing in her delight, and softening in her grief, and exulting in her triumph. That some holy souls partook of such happiness no one can doubt.

CHAPTER VI.

The Rosary leads us through our Saviour's life in company with his Blessed Mother.*

DURING the years that *she* survived her Son, she conversed with his and her friends, an object surely of affectionate regard and deep veneration. And of what would she discourse so willingly or so well as of him of whom her breast was ever full ? Or, how would they express their love better than by making him their theme ? How easily does the imagination depict the scene of some faithful follower, like Luke, anxious to have accurate knowledge of all things from the beginning, making inquiries concerning the earlier periods of our Lord's life, and then listening to the marvellous history most sweetly told—how fair and reverent the archangel came, and how her heart fluttered when she heard his salutation, and how her soul overflowed with consciousness of unheard-of grace as she accepted his errand ; how wonderfully Elizabeth greeted her, and how their infants mysteriously rejoiced in mutual recognition ; how that cold December night was warmed and brightened by the first appearance of her godlike Child, and her breast enraptured with heavenly delights as

* Ibid.

he thence drew his first earthly nourishment ; how holy Simeon proclaimed his dignity, and showed him honour in the Temple ; and how her three days' tears were dried up when she found her lost Son sitting mild, and radiant with celestial wisdom, amidst the old men of the law. What looks, what emotions accompany the recital ! With what breathless respect is it drunk in by the future Evangelist ! Or, we may fancy John more privileged on that tenderer ground upon which both have walked together—the path of the cross, on some sad anniversary, dwelling with her upon each afflicting event, recalling faithfully every sacred word, till she voluntarily felt over again the sword of grief which had pierced her soul. And then would not change the theme, and pass over to the bright Sunday morning, which saw him rise from the grave to comfort the sharers of his sufferings, and how he mounted before them all to his proper seat at the Father's right hand, and thence sent down the Holy Spirit on them ? And who would now restrain her thoughts from following him in spirit thither, and casting up a wistful glance towards the resting-place for which she longed, in which she saw *him*, her sovereign love, prepared to receive and crown her, when the fulness of her time shall be complete, and the perfection of her patience manifested ? Now a contemplative mind—deeply, affectionately, contemplative, not envying, but striving to copy, those who had such singular happiness as we have described—will find in the *holy Rosary* the opportunity of most nearly approaching it. Looking at the Blessed Mother of God as only removed in

place, not in affection—changed in situation, not in heart—he will love to entertain himself with her, as he would then have done; will fix his eye on her, as he discourses with her, in a devout salutation and prayer, upon each of those mysteries, successively, in which she had such an interest. Instead of the barren and distracting form of prayer, which *some complain* they find it, they will then discover in it that mine of spiritual riches and that sweetness of consolation which we know all those saints have found in it, who have been particularly distinguished for their piety and devotion towards the life and death of the Son of God, as well as towards his loving Mother.

CHAPTER VII. THE “OUR FATHER.”

ON a certain occasion the disciples of Christ, seeing him at prayer, a desire was awakened in their hearts to pray as he did, and “when he ceased one of his disciples said to him: Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples” (*Luke*, xi. 1); this blessed desire was fully satisfied. “He said to them *when you pray say, Father,*” &c. Our divine Lord had already enjoined them when they *prayed not to speak many words* like the heathens, who thought that *in their much speaking they were heard* (*Matt.* vi. 7); and in the spirit of this injunction he taught them this short and simple, yet complete and exalted form of prayer, which was to be at once the model of their petitions,* the

* ‘Regula postulandi a cœlesti juris-perito data’ (S. Aug.)

standard of their desires, and the rule of their actions. This heavenly prayer, called after its divine author, is not alone the most perfect and comprehensive, all other good prayers *being only expositions of it*,* but it contains at the same time the highest acts of the most sublime virtues, faith, hope, and charity, praise and adoration of God, confidence in his goodness, and conformity to his will; humility, contrition, and the love of our neighbour, with all the others;† it is also the most necessary, efficacious, and pleasing to God, being the prayer of that divine Son in whom the Father is always well pleased.

Tertullian calls it the "summary of the gospel," St. Cyprian "a full compendium of Christ's instructions and heavenly doctrine," St. Augustine "the rule of prayer given us by the heavenly lawgiver."‡

CHAPTER VIII.

The Lord's Prayer includes every other prayer, with the Eight Beatitudes and Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

WHATEVER other words we make use of, says this father, whether by way of introduction to excite the affections, or conclusion to increase them, we can say nothing but what is contained in the Lord's Prayer, if we pray in the right and proper

* S. Aug.

† "All that man can hope, desire, or pray for as profitable to himself, is comprised in the Lord's Prayer." (Catech. Concilii Tridentini.)

‡ "Regula postulandi a cælesti juris-perito data."

manner. For he who says, "As thou hast been sanctified in us, so magnify thyself among all nations" (*Eccl. xxxvi. 4*), what else does he say than *Hallowed be thy name?* He who says, "Direct my steps according to thy word" (*Ps. cxviii. 133*), what else does he pray than *Thy will be done?* He who prays, "Show us thy face and we shall be saved" (*Ps. lxxix. 4*), what else is it but *Thy kingdom come?* He who says, "Give me neither poverty nor riches" (*II. Par.*), what is it but to pray *Give us this day our daily bread?* "O Lord, remember David, and all his meekness" (*Ps. cxxxii. 1*), and "If I have rendered to them that have repaid me evils," &c. (*Ps. vii. 5*), what else but *Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive, &c.?* He who says "Take from me the greediness of the stomach" (*Eccl. xxiiii. 6*), what is it but to pray *Lead us not into temptation?* He who prays "Save me from my enemies" (*Ps. xxxi. 7*), what is it else than *Deliver us from evil?* And in like manner if you go through all the words of the other holy prayers you will *find nothing but what is contained* in the Lord's Prayer. Whoever then uses any words which can have no relation to this evangelic prayer, prays *carnally*, and I know no reason why such ought not be pronounced unlawful, since our divine Lord teaches those who are born again only to pray spiritually. But he who in prayer says, "Lord, add to my riches and increase my honours," and prays thus from the desire of such things, not with the view of doing good to men by them, I think that he can find nothing in the Lord's Prayer whereon to ground

such requests, wherefore let him be at least ashamed to ask what he is not ashamed to desire. (S. Aug. Epist. 121.)

The number of petitions seem also to correspond to the number of the beatitudes. For if it be the *Fear of the Lord* which makes *blessed the poor in spirit*, for their's is the *kingdom of heaven*, let us pray that the *name of God be hallowed among men*, through that filial fear which abides for ever. If it be *piety* by which *blessed are the meek*, let us pray that his *kingdom come*, that we may become meek and not resist him. If it be *knowledge* by which *blessed are they that mourn*, let us pray that his *will be done on earth as it is in heaven*, for if the body be subject to the spirit, as earth is to heaven, we shall not mourn hereafter. If it be *fortitude* whereby *blessed are they that hunger*, let us pray that *our daily bread be given us this day*, so that we may arrive to the full satiety. If it be *counsel* by which *blessed are the merciful*, for *they shall obtain mercy*, let us forgive those that trespass against us, that our trespasses be forgiven us. If it be *understanding* by which *blessed are the clean of heart*, let us pray that *we be not led into temptation*, that we may not have a double heart in pursuing temporal and earthly goods, which are only given to prove us. If it be *wisdom* by which *blessed are the peacemakers*, for *they shall be called the children of God*, let us pray to be delivered from evil, for this deliverance will give us the true liberty of the children of God.

CHAPTER IX.

The Preface or Introduction to the Lord's Prayer.

THE Lord's Prayer is divided into three parts—the *preface*, or introduction; the *body* of the prayer, comprising the seven petitions; and the *conclusion*. The preface is composed of the simple, yet sublime and tender words, *Our Father, who art in heaven*, on which words St. Augustine remarks: “Whereas in seeking a favour from another, our first endeavour should be to conciliate his good will, then mention our request; and since we usually seek to gain another’s good will by saying something in his praise, which we put forward in the beginning of our petition, herein our divine Lord bids us say nothing more than “*Our Father, who art in heaven.*” Many things were said to the children of Israel regarding the praise which they should give to the Lord, yet we never find that they were taught to address him by “*Our Father*”—he is set before them rather as a lord over slaves. But of Christians the Apostle says, *we have received the spirit of adoption* in which we cry out *Abba, Father*, and that not from our merits, but of grace, which we put forward in this prayer when we say *Father*, which name excites our love, for what ought be dearer than a father to his children; also a suppliant spirit when men say to God “*Our Father,*” and a certain confidence of obtaining what we ask, for what will *he* not give to his children that they ask him, *who* gave them this first that they should become children; in fine, how great the eagerness which should possess men, that whilst calling God their Father they be not unworthy of such a Father.

The rich and noble also are here reminded, when they become Christians, not to be haughty towards the poor and lowly, since all call God "Our Father," which they cannot do truly and piously unless they own them as brothers. "Besides," says St. Cyprian, "we do not say My Father, but Our Father, for the teacher of peace and union would have us pray not singly and separately, each for himself alone; our prayer is to be for all in common—not for one individual merely, but for the whole people, for we all are one. For he so willed each one to pray for all, as he in one did bear us all."*

CHAPTER X.

FIRST PETITION—"HALLOWED BE THY NAME."

OUR divine Saviour having taught us to whom we should pray, he now teaches us what things we are to ask for, and the order in which we ought to ask them; for prayer being the interpreter of our desires, we then pray as we ought, and according to right reason, when the order of our requests corresponds with the objects sought. Now God being our supreme good, and his honour and glory the end for which we were created, the petition which regards them is justly placed at the head of all the others. As dutiful children, likewise, who should have the honour and interest of so good a father dear at heart, we begin by

* "It is necessity that compels us to pray for ourselves, charity that urges us to pray for others; now the prayer most pleasing to God is that which charity commends, not that which necessity offers." (S. Chrys.)

making known to him our earnest desire, that his name, that is to say God himself, his wisdom and goodness, his power and majesty, justice and mercy, and all his perfections, may be known and honoured, loved and glorified* *on earth as they are in heaven.*† “It is a prayer worthy of being offered by man to God,” says St. Chrysostom, “to ask nothing before the glory of the Father, but to postpone all things to his praise.” These words, however, “Hallowed be thy name,” are not to be so understood, as St. Augustine remarks, as if the name of God were not holy, as it essentially is,‡ but that it be held sacred by men, that they may glorify it by their lives, not like those of whom the Apostle says, “The name of God through you is blasphemed amongst the Gentiles” (*Rom. ii. 24*). This petition, then, regards his external glory, the enlargement of his kingdom amongst the nations of the earth, that the number of the faithful servants of this divine *name* be every day increased, that all creatures may unite in rendering him that heartfelt love, honour, and obedience, which are his due. This desire is the most noble which the heart of man can conceive, since it was for this object alone that God created us to his image, endowed us with the use of reason, and redeemed us by his precious life. This was the continual and ardent desire of the saints, who cried out like King David, “not to us,

* The word is *Sanctificetur*, i.e. made holy, glorified.

† The Catechism of the Council of Trent says that these last words, which follow the third petition, may be referred to each of the three.

‡ “Holy and terrible is his name.” (*Ps.*)

O Lord, but to thy name give glory ;" or like the great St. Ignatius, "Omnia ad majorem Dei gloriam"—all for the greater glory of God. But the principal and most important object of this petition is this,* that all mankind may acknowledge and revere the true spouse of Christ, our most holy mother the Church, in whom alone is that copious and perennial fountain that cleanses and effaces all the stains of sin, from whom we receive all the sacraments of salvation and sanctification, to whom alone, and to those whom she embraces and fosters in her maternal bosom, belongs the invocation of *that divine name*, which is the only one, "under heaven given to men whereby they must be saved." (*Acts*, iv. 12.)

CHAPTER XI.

SECOND PETITION—"THY KINGDOM COME."

AFTER having prayed for the glory of God, our heavenly Father, we now ask that we be made partakers of that glory which is our inheritance as children, and the great end of religion and life, time and eternity; with this the preaching of the Gospel begins and terminates, from it the Baptist began his exhortation to penance,† and with it our divine Saviour himself opens his preaching. In his sermon on the Mount, in which he pointed out to his disciples the way to life everlasting, after proposing the subject of his discourse he commences with the *kingdom of heaven.*‡ This king-

* Catechism of the Council of Trent.

† Matt. iii. 2.

‡ Matt. iv. 17.

dom he commanded his apostles to preach in like manner, and after his resurrection “for forty days he spoke of the kingdom of God” (*Acts*, i. 3). This petition embraces all that is necessary for the life of soul and body, all that we stand in need of in our present pilgrimage—an abundance and profusion of heavenly gifts and graces. Hence our blessed Redeemer commands us to “seek first the kingdom of God and his justice” (*Matt.* vi. 33), and that all things else shall be given to us. This is the centre of the Christian life, and the object of all Christian desire, to which all our thoughts and affections ought to be directed. By these words, “Thy kingdom come” we beg that the reign of sin may be destroyed, and that God may reign in our hearts by his divine grace, which is called in holy Scripture the kingdom of heaven ;* that he may abide in us by faith, hope, and charity, which consecrate us to his worship, and constitute us a portion, as it were, of his kingdom, so that as the apostle says, “I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ;” each of us also may say, “I reign, yet not I, but Christ reigneth in me.” The words “kingdom of God” signify not alone that power which he possesses over all creatures, and that providence by which he rules and governs them, but also the special providence by which he protects and watches over the just and pious, and the kingdom of glory which he has prepared for them from the beginning of the world ; and as the kingdom of grace must precede that of glory, for no one can reign with

* “The kingdom of God is within you.” (*Luke*, xvii. 21.)

God hereafter, in whom *his* grace has not reigned here; so we ought not be satisfied with praying earnestly for the coming of his kingdom. we must make use of the means by which it is sought and found, and practise those virtues in which it is said to consist,* and which will entitle us to a place in that kingdom where we shall live and reign for ever and ever.

CHAPTER XII.

THIRD PETITION—"THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN."

As our divine Lord has declared, "Not every one that says to me Lord, Lord, shall enter the *kingdom of heaven*, but he that doth *the will of my Father* who is in heaven,"† so the prayer of all those who earnestly desire the coming of that kingdom must be that they may do their heavenly Father's will; for he who wishes to secure the end must determine to adopt the means to obtain it; "If you wish to enter into life," says Christ, "keep the commandments." Hence this petition naturally follows the other, and is placed immediately after it by our blessed Saviour. "In that kingdom of bliss," says St. Augustine, "the happy life will be made perfect in the just, as it is now in the angels; and therefore after the petition 'Thy kingdom come,' follows 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven,' i.e., as by the angels thy

* "The kingdom of God is justice and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." (Rom. xiv. 15.)

† Matt. vii. 21.

will is done in heaven, no error clouding their knowledge, no misery to mar their blessedness, so likewise may it be done by thy saints on earth." "See how excellently," says St. Chrysostom, "this petition succeeds the other, for as he taught us to seek after the things of heaven, saying 'Thy kingdom come,' so now before we arrive at it he wishes that earth should be in a manner changed into heaven," . . . that error be rooted up, truth planted in its stead, malice banished, and virtue return, and thus earth may not differ from heaven. In this petition a remedy is proposed to us against the miseries and vices of corrupt nature, and all the evils entailed on us by our first parents' fall, and *this* is conformity to the divine will, which is the sole corrective against our evil propensities, the salutary rule and standard by which we are to regulate our whole lives, and all our thoughts and actions. This *will* is the true food of man's soul that sustains its spiritual life,* the sacred bond that unites it to its Saviour in the closest ties† of benevolence and love.

To do the will of God is the noblest aspiration, the most glorious pursuit that can engage the heart of man. It was this that brought down our Saviour from heaven,‡ and in the fulfilment of which he spent his entire life, and in submission

* " My food is to do the will of him that sent me." (John, iv. 34.)

† " Whoever shall do the will of my Father, he is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Matt. xii. 50.)

‡ " I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John, vi. 38.)

to it* he embraced the ignominious death of the cross. The saints, without exception, made this the most earnest object of their prayers, continually exclaiming with holy David, " Teach me, O Lord, to do thy will," and it is this distinguishes the children of Satan from the children of God, " Who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."†

CHAPTER XIII.

FOURTH PETITION—"GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD."

IN the four remaining petitions which follow, we ask for those temporal blessings which are necessary for obtaining the eternal.

" We ought to reflect," says St. Chrysostom, " how, after saying ' Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven'—because he spoke to those who live on earth clothed with flesh, and not to persons like the angels, free from passion or pain—he descends to the wants of the body, which requires food and sustenance. He therefore teaches us to pray not for money or the gratification of lust, but merely for *daily bread*, and as if this limit were not sufficient, he adds ' give us *this day*,' in order that we may not trouble ourselves by anxiety for the coming day." As man is referred to God as his last end, so should the body be subordinate to the soul, and the goods of this life to those of the next, as means to their end.

* " Not my will but thine be done." (Matt. xxvi. 39.)

† John, i. 13.

The tendency of the Christian religion is not to deny or stifle the wants of our earthly nature, but to sanctify them by referring them to God, and making them subordinate to the higher interests of the soul. This petition includes not alone what is necessary to sustain the body and to supply its wants, but also whatever we require for the life and support of the soul, for “not on bread alone doth man live, but on every word that cometh from the mouth of God.”* Hence it embraces all those supernatural aids necessary to our spiritual life and advancement in virtue, and especially the eucharistic bread, the *bread of the strong*, “which cometh down from heaven that if any man eat of it he may not die;”† and which is also our daily bread, because offered daily for us on the altar, and because we ought to live in such a manner as to receive it daily.‡ It is called *our bread*,§ because it is the food of the faithful alone, that is, of those who, uniting charity with faith, wash away the stains of sin from their souls in the sacrament of penance; who, not unmindful that they are the children of God, receive and adore *this divine sacrament* with all possible veneration and holiness. Finally, in offering this petition,|| the rich ought to remember that they are to look upon wealth as the free gift of God, bestowed on them in order that they may share it with the needy and indigent; and with this the words of the apostle agree: “Charge the rich not

* Matt. iv. 4.

† John, vi. 50.

‡ “If it is daily bread, why receive it only once a-year?”
(St. Ambrose)

§ Catechism of the Council of Trent.

|| Ibid.

to be high-minded, nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living God, to do good, to be rich in good works, to give easily, to communicate to others.”*

CHAPTER XIV.

FIFTH PETITION—“AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS AS WE ALSO FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS.”

AFTER we have asked for (in the four first petitions) all the blessings we stand in need of whether for body or soul, for time or eternity, we now ask (in the three following) to be delivered from all the evils, past, present, and future, to which we are exposed. Of these, sin is the first and the principal, both in its own nature and in its consequences, and next to this is temptation that leads to it. God himself, whom we have outraged and despised, is the first to seek after and call back the sinner to repentance, teaching him how to ask forgiveness, and giving him the assured hope of pardon in case he repents. This petition is most important to salvation,† containing, as it does, a kind of summary of all the benefits and mercies accumulated on the human race by our blessed Saviour, as foretold by the prophet: “The iniquity of the house of Jacob shall be forgiven, and *this is all the fruit, that sin be taken away;*‡ as the royal prophet also has declared: “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven.”§ Since, however, we must pray *as we ought*, in order

* 1 Tim. vi. 17, &c.

† Catechism of the Council of Trent.

‡ Isaias, xxvii. 9.

§ Ps. xxxi. 1.

to obtain what we ask, we are here reminded of the first disposition necessary to obtain pardon, which is to acknowledge and to feel sincere sorrow for the sins which we have committed ; then indeed may we fly to God as to our Father, beseeching him to deal with us, not according to his justice, but according to his mercy.

But though we are all* conscious of the need of forgiveness for our manifold sins, which, while they last, prevent the *name of God* being *hallowed*, and *his will being done* by us, yet we cannot hope for pardon without being at the same time disposed to pardon the wrongs and injuries we have received from others. This is the condition which God has laid down ; so that the measure of mercy to be shown to us is, that which we show to others. So that the Christian's constant sense of the debts he owes to God and his want of forgiveness is that which must, as it were, give a tone to his conduct towards his fellow-creatures. This, then, is a most essential condition of our prayers being heard, and is even founded on the law of nature, which dictates that we should do to others as we would wish that they should do to us. There is nothing besides which makes us like to God, and as it were divine, so much as this disposition, which is the surest proof that we are true

* "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves" (1 John, i. 8). St. Augustine remarks, that even the apostles, who attained the highest sanctity, were commanded to say this prayer ; and every priest must offer the holy sacrifice for "his own innumerable sins, offences, and negligences." "Love your enemies that you may be the children of your Father." (Mark, xi. 25.)

children of him who “makes his sun to shine on the good and bad, and his rain to fall on the just and the unjust,” who died for us when we were buried in sin, and therefore his enemies.

CHAPTER XV.

SIXTH PETITION—“AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.”

THE prayer for forgiveness of past sins is naturally followed by that for deliverance from sin in future. Like good children who, having offended their father and received pardon from him, our greatest concern should be lest we should begin to offend him anew. After the children of God have obtained forgiveness of their sins,* and begin to devote themselves to the love and service of God, with entire dependence on his paternal goodness and providence, then it is that the enemy of mankind employs every means and exerts all his powers to make them relapse into sin, so that their condition becomes worse than before their conversion ; for as the prince of the apostles says, “It had been better for them not to have known the way of justice, than after they have known it to turn back from that holy commandment which was delivered to them.”† On this account our divine Saviour, knowing the number and strength of the furious enemies that beset us from within and without in the warfare of this life, wished that we should place all our hopes of victory in him who overcometh the world.‡

* See Catechism of the Council of Trent.

† 2 Peter, ii. 21.

‡ “Have confidence, I have overcome the world.” (John, xvi. 33.)

In this petition we do not pray to be entirely exempt from temptation, which is inevitable in this life, seeing that the greatest saints were tempted, and even our Saviour himself,* that he might teach us to resist, and obtain for us the grace to conquer temptation; what we ask then is, that we may not be overcome by yielding to the assaults and suggestions of Satan—that we may be delivered from temptations above our strength, that the divine grace and assistance may be at hand to support us when our strength fails us. Temptation, though it lead us into sin, is so far from being itself a sin that it may prove the occasion of great merit, so as even to make blessed him who suffers it, as St. James says. As the wind that shakes the plants aids their growth at the same time, says a holy father,† so does temptation increase the vigour of the soul; it makes it know its own weakness on the one hand, and the power of divine grace on the other. “What doth that man know who hath not been tried,”‡ says the Holy Ghost. These words, however,§ “Lead us not into temptation,” are not to be understood as if God tempted any one, which would be to make him the author of sin. “Let no man when he is tempted say that he is tempted by God,” says the apostle, “for God is not a tempter of evils, and he tempteth no man,”|| This and the

* “Tempted himself in all things.” (Heb. iv. 15.)

† St. Nilus. ‡ Eccl. xxxiv.

§ *Lead us not* is equivalent to *suffer us not to be led*, showing that Satan can do nothing without God's permission, “who will not suffer us to be tempted beyond our strength,” says the apostle.

|| St. James, i. 13.

like expressions in Scripture are, therefore, to be understood not as implying any positive act on the part of God, but only his permission. What we ask then chiefly is, that he abandon us not so as to leave us fall an easy prey into the hands of the enemy, but may give us strength, so that we may be of the number of those of whom he has said, "To him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with me in my throne, as I also have overcome, and am set down with my Father in his throne."*

CHAPTER XVI.

SEVENTH PETITION—"BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL."

In the last petition we have asked the grace to avoid falling into the guilt of sin, in this we entreat to be freed from the punishment due to it. "We ought to pray not alone that we be not led into evil, from which we are free at present," says St. Augustine, "but also that we be freed from that into which we have been led;" and this is why the petition, "Deliver us from evil," follows next. This petition contains the substance and efficacy of all the others, being as it were an epitome of the rest; "for when we have obtained all that is comprised in this prayer," says St. Cyprian, "*nothing more remains to be asked* after we ask the protection of God against *evil*;" once that is obtained, we remain safe and secure against the united efforts of the world and the devil. Our blessed Lord delivered by way of precept, and confirmed by example this form of prayer; and, as if to add to it greater weight and authority, he made

* Apoc. iii. 21.

use of it at his departure out of this world, when praying to his heavenly Father for man's salvation : "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world," said he, "but that thou shouldst keep them from evil."* Nothing more powerfully induces us to pray for deliverance from the evils that beset us, than the hope and feeling that there is one who sees them, and is at the same time able and willing to deliver us from them ; this conscious feeling nature itself has implanted in the breasts of all mankind, who look up, as it were, spontaneously to God for assistance in their distress. Knowing then the evils which surround us in this life, where not a single day passes over us without bringing with it a more than sufficient share,† what can contribute more to our own interests than that God should require of us at least to ask deliverance from them ? By doing so *he* has ennobled the instinct of our nature by elevating it to the dignity of a Christian precept, putting into our mouths the very words whereby we can fulfil it so easily. We ought, then, to be grateful to him for having given us this *petition*, and to show our gratitude by making frequent use of it. In it we beseech God to deliver us from *all evils*, past, present, and *to come*, as the Church explains it,‡ especially from sin, the greatest of all evils, and from him who, being the author and instigator of it, is called the *Evil One*, our mortal enemy, who wages continual war against us.

* John, xvii. 15.

† "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." (Matt. vi. 34.)

‡ In the Mass and in the Litanies.

§ "AMEN."

Having asked from God all that we required, we now confirm our prayer by saying *Amen*, which is the seal of the Lord's Prayer, according to St. Jerome.

What wonder, says St. Cyprian, that this prayer was taught by God, since he has comprised all our petitions in one saving sentence, as was foretold by the Prophet Isaias: "The Lord will make an abridged word in the universe."* For when the Lord Jesus Christ came for all that he might gather together the learned and unlearned alike, and give the precepts of salvation to every age and sex, he made a grand compendium of his teaching, in order that the memory of his disciples might not be burthened by his divine instructions, but that they might easily learn all that was necessary to simple faith." This word confirms our petitions, being, as it were, a pledge that they will be heard; so that by it we obtain a favourable hearing with the Father through his only Son, "in whom all the promises of God are, it is; therefore also by him, *Amen* to God, unto our glory." (2 Cor. i. 20.)

CHAPTER XVII.

PARAPHRASE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.†

COMPOSED BY ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

Our Father most holy, our Creator, our Redeemer, our Saviour, and our Consoler. *Who art*

* Is. xxiii.

† Tom. v. Bibliothecæ S.S. PPm. A-Lapide says of this Paraphrase: "It is sublime, full of unction and fervour, and pleasing to God, for he was taught of God."

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in heaven, in the angels, and in the saints ; enlightening them that they may know thee, for thou art the true light, O Lord ; inflaming them with thy divine love, for thou art the true love, O Lord, who dwellest in them and dost satiate them with thy beatitude ; for thou art the sovereign good, and the eternal good, from whom comes all good, and without whom there is no good. Hallowed be thy name ; may thy knowledge shine in us, that we may know the full extent of thy benefits, the duration of thy promises, the sublimity of thy majesty, and the depth of thy judgments. Thy kingdom come, in order that thou mayest reign in us by thy grace, and mayest bring us to thy kingdom, where is the clear vision of thyself, thy perfect love, thy blessed society, and thy eternal enjoyment. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, in order that we may love thee with our whole hearts, ever thinking of thee, with our whole souls, ever longing after thee, with all our minds, directing all our intentions to thee, and seeking thy honour and glory in all things ; with all our strength, employing in thy loving service all the strength of our bodies and souls, and all our senses, making no other use of them ; that we may love our neighbours as ourselves, using every effort to draw them to thy love, rejoicing in the happiness of others as our own, grieving at their miseries, and giving no offence to anyone. Give us this day our daily bread ; give us this day thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, give him to us in our memory, give him to us in our understanding, that we may know, and remember, and revere him for the love he has shown us, and for

all that he has said, and done, and suffered for us. *Forgive us our trespasses* by thy infinite mercy and by the unspeakable virtue of the passion of thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, by the merits and intercession of the ever Blessed Virgin Mary, and of all the elect. *As we forgive them that trespass against us*; and as we may not grant them full forgiveness on our part, do thou, O Lord, enable us to forgive them entirely, that for thy sake we may love our enemies and devoutly intercede for them with thee; that we may not return evil for evil to anyone, and that in thee we may study to do good to all. *And lead us not into temptation*, hidden or manifest, sudden or dangerous. *But deliver us from evil*, past, present, and to come. Amen, willingly and gratis.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MEDITATION ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.*

BY THE VENERABLE FR. DE PONTE, S.J.†

IN the sermon on the Mount, Christ our Lord taught his disciples the divine prayer which we call the *Lord's Prayer*, which deservedly holds the chief place above every other, because it was composed by the supreme Master of prayer, in order to teach us how to pray. On this account we will meditate each word separately, according to the practice of praying by words. Placing myself, therefore, in the presence of God, who is Three in One, to whom this prayer is offered (though it may be also directed to each of the

* St. Thomas, Q. 2. 9. 8. A. 9. Matt. vi. 9. Luke, xii. 2.

† Translated specially for this work.

three persons of the Holy Trinity) I will humbly beseech Christ our Lord, that he may vouchsafe to enlighten my soul with his heavenly light, and to kindle in it the fire of his divine love, that I may be able to feel and understand the truths and spiritual excellencies which he has comprised in this concise prayer, and that I may ask in the proper manner those things which he wishes me to ask of him, with great purity of intention, with a fervour of devotion, and affection like to that which he possessed when addressing his Father whilst teaching it. For we may easily believe, that whilst he taught his apostles to pray in this manner, he himself offered the same prayer to the Father, nor does he cease to offer it in *us* every day. For as St. Augustine says,* whilst Christ prays for us as our priest, he also prays in us as our head, inspiring us with the virtue and spirit of prayer, and thus we say this prayer with him and he with us, and our prayer must be offered in union with the merits of his, that it may be graciously received and blessed with a happy issue.

2. We are to observe, however, that Christ our Lord taught this prayer on two different occasions, first, *publicly* on the mountain to all, at another time when one of his disciples said to him, after he had ended his prayer: "Master, teach *us* to pray, as John also taught his disciples." (*Luke*, xi. 1.) From which we learn that this form of prayer ought to be practised both in public and private. When repeated in public, as in the sacrifice of the Mass, it ought to be said with that brevity which the place requires; but

* Præfat in Ps. lxxxv.

when said in private, and made the subject-matter of meditation, several hours may be employed in it, and we may repeat to Christ our Lord : "Lord, teach us to pray, not only as John taught his disciples, but as thou didst teach thine apostles, imprinting on our hearts those truths, feelings, and affections which thou didst communicate to them." Having made this petition, I will take one word alone of the Lord's Prayer, reflecting on its meaning and weighing it with myself in deep meditation, adding such affections, petitions, and colloquies as are in keeping with the subject I am meditating, or such as the Holy Ghost shall inspire.

CHAPTER XIX.

"OUR"

1. On this word I will consider, why our Lord would have us say not *my* Father, but our Father. This he did *first* that we might know his infinite charity and liberality, which shine forth in this, that, whereas he could have only *one natural* son, he wished to have many adopted children, communicating this surpassing dignity, so as that each can enjoy it without prejudice to any other. For he is the Father of all, in such a manner, that he is as much and equally mine, as if he were mine alone, and none besides.

Colloquy.—Blessed for ever be such immense charity, which, amidst such a number of children, watches over each one with as much care, as though there were only one.

2. He wished to teach us, that as he is the father of many children, so we ought all be like bre-

thren, that we may excite within us the love of one another, desiring and praying that all without exception may be worthy children of such a father, without despising any ; for the rich and poor, the high and lowly, the learned and ignorant, may equally become children of the one heavenly Father, according to the words of the prophet Malachy—“ Have we not all one Father ? Hath not one God created us ? Why then doth every one despise his brother ? ” (ii. 10).

Colloquy.—O our Father, it is enough for me to know that thou art the Father of all men, that I may love them as my brethren, embrace all in my love, since all are embraced in thy love.

3. He wished to excite in us reverence towards himself. For the word *my* is too familiar and more becoming the only Begotten Son of this divine Father, whom also I must address with the same love and reverence as the Father. This, however, need not prevent me from saying *my Father* when I am alone, or in my own private chamber, since he is as much mine as if he had no other adopted child but me.

CHAPTER XX.

“ FATHER.”

1. I will *first* consider the reasons and titles by which our Lord and our God is also *Our Father*. In the first place he is the Father of all mankind by title of creation ; for he gave them their being, making them to his own image and likeness. He is moreover the Father of the *just*, by the life of grace which he bestowed on them; making them

his adopted children and heirs to his kingdom. And he is a thousand times their Father on this title, being ready to restore them, as often as they repent, the life received in baptism and lost by sin. And in this manner he desires to be the Father of all, not for his own sake, but for ours ; not by our merits, but by his grace and mercy alone. And though he offers himself gratis to be our Father, yet it cost him no small price to become such, since he begot us on the cross by enduring the most exquisite torments ; for being the only Begotten Son, he laid down his life to make us his adopted children, that we and *he* might have the same Father. From all these considerations I will draw strong affections to praise and glorify *him* for each of these titles, under which he becomes my Father. O most loving Father, I give thee thanks for the most noble life of grace which thou givest to thy children, never growing weary of restoring it when they lose it by sin. O you angels, who have God for father in heaven, give him praise and glory for vouchsafing to become the Father also of men living on earth.

2. Consider, *then*, how well God fulfils the office of father, loving us so tenderly, watching over us with so much care, protecting us by his providence, providing for us abundantly, and placing us in that state most conducive to our salvation, and in all these respects so far excelling all earthly fathers, that they appear unworthy of the name compared with our heavenly Father ; on which account Christ commands us, “ Call none your father upon earth, for one is your Father who is in heaven.” (*Matt. xxiii. 9.*)

Colloquy.—O Sovereign Father, what thanks shall I give thee for deigning to take upon thee the duty of Father towards me ! I wish no longer to call those fathers who are upon earth, who easily abandon me (for *my* father and mother have left me*), but thee alone my heavenly Father, who hast taken me up, and wilt not forsake me, until forsaken by me. O Father, be thou and show thyself a father to me, fulfilling the name which for my sake thou didst take upon thee.

3. I will consider in the *third* place, that God in willing to become my Father, offers to me the dignity of his son, and requires of me in turn that I fulfil the duty and offices of a good son towards his father ; that I love, and reverence, and obey him, and show zeal for his honour and glory.

Colloquy.—O heavenly Father, how do I, thy vile creature, deserve so great a happiness as to be called thy child ? What charity hath moved thee to will that *I should be called, and should be thy son?* (*1 John, iii. 1*). Since thou, then, dost the duty of a father so well towards me, assist me that I may faithfully perform the duty of a good child towards thee. O vile worm, beware of degenerating from the dignity bestowed on thee, by doing anything unworthy a child of such a Father ; study to imitate him in your life, for it becomes children to be like their parents.

4. In the last place, I will consider why God desires that we should call him Father in this prayer. 1st. To excite in us affections of love and confidence towards him ; for if we pray with

* Ps. xxvi. 10.

these, he will give us what we ask. 2nd. That we might begin by the praise of that which he holds in most esteem, giving him glory for vouchsafing to be our Father ; and that this may serve us as title and claim for obtaining what we ask. 3rd. That we may know that he desires to be served by us with the spirit and affection of children, and therefore that whatever we ask be such as becomes good children to ask of so good a Father.

Prayer.—O Sovereign Father ! I am certain thou wilt grant me whatever I ask as a son, since thou commandest me to ask of thee as a true Father.

CHAPTER XXI.

“ WHO ART IN HEAVEN.”

1. HERE I am to consider why, since God is everywhere, *he* only says, “ Who art in heaven.” 1st. He made mention of *heaven* to excite reverence in me, on considering the dignity of this supreme Lord and Father who reigns in heaven. 2nd. To raise up my heart from earthly things to heaven, that despising all that is here below I might aspire to that heavenly inheritance which my Father has prepared for me. 3rd. That I may live in this mortal life not alone as a stranger and pilgrim, but likewise as a candidate for heaven, striving after that heavenly purity without which no one shall enter there. 4th. Especially that I may, in time of prayer, *lift up my eyes* to heaven, to the *mountain from which my help is to come* (*Ps. cxx.*), and to the good things that I seek after.

Colloquy.—O Father, who dwellest in heaven, draw me thither where thou art, and until thou

hast brought me, aid me by thy grace, that all
“ my conversation be in heaven” (*Phil. iii. 30*),
and that I may forget the things of earth. O my
soul, who art a pilgrim on this earth, whereas
thy Father and inheritance are in heaven, sigh
after thy true home where thou shalt enjoy this
blessed inheritance.

2. In fine, I will consider, that the *just* are
likewise called heaven, God dwelling in them by
his grace (S. Aug. Serm. in Monte, cap. 9, and
S. Ambr. l. 5 de Sacr.), and it is of them men-
tion is herē made ; that we may understand, that
God is in a special manner *their* Father, who are
this heaven, and that he who prays should banish
every sin and earthly thought, and become a kind
of heaven, where God may dwell ; that he may
enter into and recollect himself, pouring forth his
prayer from where God dwells—the very depth
of his heart.

Colloquy.—Oh, would that this heaven were clear
and adorned with virtues, so that God might delight
to dwell therein. I confess, O Lord, that I am a man
of the earth, earthly, a child of the earthly Adam ;
but I desire to be changed into a heaven, and be-
come by thy grace heavenly, as a child of the hea-
venly Adam. Come, O Lord, to this thy child,
who by thy presence will be changed into a heaven.

These three words just mentioned are, as it
were, the prelude to this prayer ; those that fol-
low contain the seven petitions comprised in this
prayer.

CHAPTER XXII.

FIRST PETITION—“ HALLOWED BE THY NAME.”

IN the first petition we pray that God may be known, praised, and glorified; that his name may be held in veneration, kept holy, and adored. Pondering each word separately I will consider, *first*, why he says *hallowed*, rather than praised or glorified. The reason is, that God esteems nothing so much as being holy; and therefore nothing can give him greater glory than that he be regarded as holy, and that we should, in imitation of the four living creatures in the Apocalypse, cry out with great affection, “Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of Hosts, who was, and who is, and who is to come.”*

Colloquy.—O most holy Father, I rejoice from my heart in that sanctity thou dost possess, and I desire that thy children resemble thee therein; and I wish to prefer it to all things else, that keeping thy commandments I may be holy, as thou art holy.

2. I will consider, why it is said, hallowed be thy *name*, rather than thy *majesty*, or *power*. The reason is, that whatever we know of God, or bears his name amongst us, deserves to be hallowed, and glorified, and held in veneration by us.

Colloquy.—O heavenly Father, by whatsoever name I address thee, thou art holy; and I therefore desire that thy sanctity be acknowledged by all. Thou art called omnipotent, wise, creator, governor, lord, father; hallowed then by all be thy almighty power and wisdom, O holy Creator,

* Apoc. iv. 8.

holy Governor, holy Father, all thy names are holy ; it is but just that every knee should bend in adoration at thy divine name, that all should worship and reverence it when pronounced, for it is worthy of being mentioned with the highest veneration for its sanctity.

3. I will consider the word *thy*, as if he said : hallowed be *thy* name, not mine ; for thou alone art holy by essence, nor does any other merit the Divine honour of sanctity but thou, from whom and by whom every vestige of sanctity comes to the just. “ Not to us, O Lord, but to thy name give glory” (*Ps. cxiii. 9*) ; not our, but thy most sweet name be glorified. For to thee alone, “ the King of ages, immortal and invisible, is all honour and glory due (*1 Tim. vi. 7*) ; but to us “ confusion of face” (*Baruch, vi. 15*) and contempt.

Colloquy.—I am confounded, O my God and Saviour, for the pride of heart which makes me desire that my name be known and esteemed and published over the world—I who deserve rather to be despised, and scorned, and forgotten by all. Would that I might employ myself in seeking the glory of thy name, and in total forgetfulness of my own.

4. I will consider why, to the petition for the *sanctification of God's name*, Christ did not add *by us*. The reason is, that our petitions and desires should be confined by no limits or bounds, but that the sanctification of his most holy name might extend to all angels as well as men, and not alone to those now on earth but to these also in heaven, and the souls in purgatory ; to all present and future generations—yea, that all creatures in

this visible world might praise and glorify his holy name after their own manner. For it is most worthy to be glorified by all, and that "every knee should bend of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth," before the adorable name of God, and that of his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour.

5. I will consider in what manner both I, and those for whom I pray, ought to sanctify this holy name, for the chief glory of *his* name consists in this, that all should believe what *he* reveals, hope what he promises, obey what he commands, adore and serve him in the manner he ordains; and, in fine, love him with their whole heart, and that the life they lead, and the works they perform, be such that those "who see them may glorify their Father who is in heaven" (*Matt. v. 16*).

Colloquy.—O most glorious Father, I beseech thee by the merits of thy only Son that thou bestow on all infidels the light of faith, on the faithful grace and charity, on the just thy ardent love, that they may sanctify thy holy name on earth as the blessed do in heaven: Wo to me through whom and whose works the *name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles* (*Rom. ii. 24*). Assist me, O Lord, that they be such in future as to glorify thy name for ever. Amen.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SECOND PETITION—"THY KINGDOM COME."

CONSIDER what kingdom this is, whose coming we here pray for. 1st. We pray for that kingdom by which God reigns in the just by his grace.

Hence this kingdom embraces many things—the *faith* we are to profess; the laws of government we are to obey; the sacraments we are to receive; the sacrifice we are to offer; all the virtues by which we are to serve our King, so disposing our souls that he vouchsafe to come and dwell in them; in fine, that *kingdom of God*, which the Apostle says “is justice, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” (*Rom. xiv. 17*).

Colloquy.—O King of heaven, let thy kingdom come to us, and come daily with new increase of perfection. For it is most right that thou reign in us as our true and lawful king, that thou rule over us, and that we be subject to thy commands.

2. We pray for the kingdom of eternal glory, wherein God reigns with the blessed in peace. He said not: bring us to thy kingdom, but, let *thy kingdom come* to us. For if this kingdom come to us by grace, it is certain that it will bring us to glory; and therefore we ought to be more solicitous for the first kingdom than for the other; for all men desire to reign with Christ in heaven, because this is delightful to them; but all do not equally desire Christ to reign in them on earth, for this has somewhat painful in it.

Colloquy.—I humbly beseech thee, O my King, may thy kingdom come, that thou mayest reign in me and all men by thy grace. I also beseech thee that this “holy city, the new Jerusalem,” come down from heaven, reveal and make itself known to us by a lively faith, that its light may inflame us with love of it, and lead us so as to become its inhabitants. O that I might see myself all-absorbed in this kingdom; that it would come and enter my

soul ! for *within me* that must be which shall make me happy.

3. We pray that the last and final kingdom of God—which shall be on the last day—may come, when the kingdom of Satan shall be entirely destroyed, and God shall reign in the just, glorifying their souls and bodies, that the kingdom of his glory will be complete (*Apoc. vi. 11*).

Colloquy.—Oh, that this kingdom might come, when sin, being at an end, the desire of those holy souls who expect it will be satisfied—when united to their bodies they shall possess *it* for ever.

4. I will consider, in fine, this word *thy*. I will say, let *thy kingdom come*, O Lord, that whatsoever is not thine be destroyed ; that the *reign of sin* (*Rom. v. 15*), or of Satan may no longer hold sway over me, but that thou reigning by thy grace in justice mayest destroy this kingdom, I humbly pray thee. Neither do I ask that the kingdom of this world, which consists in riches, honours, and pleasures, come to me ; but thy kingdom, which is based on true virtue.

Colloquy.—O most sweet Saviour, who hast declared, thy “kingdom is not of this world” (*John, xviii. 36*), I wish for thy kingdom ; this I desire, and this alone do I ask. Come, most Holy Trinity, enter into us, dwell and reign in *us*, who live on earth, as thou reignest in the saints in heaven, that we also may serve thee as they serve and please thee. Amen.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THIRD PETITION—"THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH,
AS IT IS IN HEAVEN."

1. CONSIDER, first, what this will is, which we pray may be done. It is God's will, declared by the commandments of the divine law, the Evangelical counsels, the secret inspirations of the Holy Ghost, the ordinances of the Church, its ministers, and all those placed over us in the name and the place of God.

Colloquy.—Oh, that we would always accomplish this will of God; since it ought be enough for us that it is the will of our Creator, in order that we gladly embrace it. *My life is in thy will* (*Ps. xxix. 6*), O God, to fulfil it: my death is in transgressing it. May I then fulfil and not transgress it, that I may have life and may not die.

2. I will consider the word *thy*, saying to God: I wish not, O Lord, to follow my own will, which is perverse; nor the will of the flesh, which rebels against the spirit; nor of the devil, which is unjust; nor of the world, which is vain; but *thy will be done*, which alone is good and just, and the rule and model of every good will.

Colloquy.—O sweet Jesus, who didst come down from heaven, not to do thine own will, but the will of thy Father (*John, vi. 38*), aid me by thy grace, that I may in all things renounce and deny my own will, and submit it to thy divine will.

3. I will consider the manner of fulfilling this divine will, which is expressed by these words, "on earth, as it is in heaven," that is, as the angels and saints fulfil it in heaven. 1st. *Entirely*,

so as to neglect nothing in the least. 2nd. With a *pure intention* of pleasing God. 3rd. *Readily, willingly, and exactly*, without delay or repugnance. 4th. With fortitude and perseverance to the end. 5th. With fervent, constant, and intense love; placing our whole delight and joy in doing the will of God.

Colloquy.—O most tender Father, it was most wise to pray first that thy kingdom come, and thy heaven penetrate our inward soul, since thou demandest, that whilst here on earth we live like those who are in heaven. Oh, that I might fulfil thy will with all the perfection that is possible. For I wish not to be sparing in desiring that which thou with so much goodness commandest me to ask of thee.

4. We here pray, in fine, that the divine will be done by the *earthly* man as it is by the *heavenly*—above all, as it was by the *heavenly Adam*, Jesus Christ our Lord, who came from heaven to do the will of his Father with the most excellent perfection.

Colloquy.—O heavenly Father, it is just and reasonable that the children begotten by thy gracious will should do what thou commandest, as did the Son begotten of thy substance. “Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God” (*Ps. cxlii. 10*), to whom be honour and glory everlasting. Amen.

CHAPTER XXV.

FOURTH PETITION—"GIVE US THIS DAY CUR
DAILY BREAD."

1. CONSIDER what bread we ask of God in this petition ; for we ask not any sort but the super-substantial and most excellent bread. 1st. We ask that bread which is the food and the support of the soul, the most Holy Sacrament of the altar, beseeching that he make us worthy to receive it, either sacramentally every day, or at least spiritually along with the innumerable fruits and graces which it bestows.

Colloquy.—“O bread of life, who camest down from heaven for the life of the world” (*John*, iv. 34), give me thyself, that I may live by thee and in thee, and be ever united to thee. Amen.

2. We ask the usual support of our souls, which consists in those *succours* of grace, whereby its spiritual life is preserved, amongst which are comprised the sacraments, the lights, and inspirations, and understanding of the divine mysteries, and that bread of which Christ spoke : “ My food is to do the will of my Father, who sent me” (*John*, iv. 34).

Colloquy.--O most loving Father, who commandest me to lead a heavenly life, and to do thy will on earth, as it is done in heaven ; give me these two kinds of heavenly bread, which may preserve in me a pure life here, until I gain life everlasting. Amen.

3. We ask the bread necessary to sustain the life of the body, because he wills us to sustain it,

and to ask this bread of him, not with over-anxious and superfluous solicitude, but with that confidence which we ought to have in his holy providence. In all which he gives us to understand, that we are his children and as infants entirely depending on the support that our Father will give us, without whose providence we could not live by our strength.

4. Consider the word *our*, for though this super-substantial bread be truly of God himself, as it comes from him to us, and he prepares and distributes it, still he wishes us to call it *our*, because intended to provide for our necessities ; and because our blessed Redeemer purchased it for us, and applies to us the right of his merits to ask it, as it is ours now by title of his promise.

Colloquy.—Since this divine bread is prepared in a different manner for the angels in heaven, and for men on earth, for the perfect and imperfect, I ask thee O Lord, for all, *our* bread, suitable to our nature and capacity, and profitable to our salvation. I ask not unnecessary corporal food, nor the superfluous bread of indulgence, but *our* bread, necessary for our wants, in order to employ and spend our lives in thy service.

3. Consider the word *daily*, as if we should say to God : we ask no extraordinary, or unusual, or singular portion, which thou art wont to bestow on thy special friends, judging ourselves unworthy of it ; but the usual daily allowance, without which the soul cannot live, and advance in the spiritual life, nor the body exist. We leave the other extraordinary bread of thy divine favours to thy providence, and to the sweet disposal of thy eternal

decrees. 4th. I will weigh the words *give us*, because he commands me to ask this bread not for myself alone, but for all men as brothers, bound to me by charity and the ties of nature (even though enemies), according to what Christ commands : “ Pray for those that persecute and calumniate you” (*Matt. v. 44*) ; that I may know if I should see “ my enemy hungry I am to give him to eat” (*Rom. xii. 20*), since I ask *our* bread, which is his as well.

4. I will in fine consider the words “ *this day*,” for he does not say *this day* and *to-morrow*, but *this day only* ; for God wishes us to ask it every day, and by frequent daily prayer, that we may feel our daily dependence on him, so as to banish all superfluous anxiety for the morrow, which may never come for *us* ; just as God commanded the Israelites “ that they should gather the manna every day, what was sufficient for that day” (*Ex. xvi. 44*), that they might always depend on divine providence. I may, it is true, ask that supersubstantial bread *this day*, which, though it embrace our whole present life, is called *to-day* (*Heb. iii. 13*), because it is but as a day compared with eternity.

Colloquy.—O heavenly Father, give me this bread in abundance *this day* and for ever, yet so that I may *this day* live and pray with as much fervour as if no other day remained for me.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FIFTH PETITION—"AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US."

CONSIDER what these trespasses are for which we ask pardon :

1. They are mortal and venial sins, and the punishment due to them ; all of which God alone can forgive, but this he does by the means he has ordained. We ask therefore that these means be applied to us, and grace given us to make use of them so as to obtain the forgiveness of our trespasses.

2. Though one should arrive to that degree of holiness, as justly to call God Father ; though his kingdom may come to him, and *he* study to do the divine will on earth, as it is done in heaven, he ought still to acknowledge himself a sinner, and feel sensible that he daily falls into venial sins and defects, so as to have reason to say "*Forgive us our sins.*"

Colloquy.—O most kind Father, I confess that I daily contract not one alone, but many debts, since I often fall. But thou, who art the fountain of mercy, feelest delight in forgiving, since thou dost command us to ask forgiveness. Behold, I ask, as thou desirest ; grant then what I ask, for thou delightest to grant it.

3. I will consider what those trespasses are, which we are to forgive our neighbours and debtors. These are the offences and injuries done me, which I must forgive, without entertaining hatred or taking revenge on any account,

or showing any signs of enmity, but on the contrary those of charity and friendship. *He*, however, forgives more perfectly who, forgetting the injury done him, shows a special love and kindness towards the offender; for thus he shall obtain a more full and abundant forgiveness of his own offences from God. 2nd. Whence I am to understand how much God desires that we forgive one another's trespasses, since he has made this the condition of our being forgiven; also how much he wishes that we pardon immediately, so that the "sun may not set upon our anger" (*Eph. iv. 26*); for he commands us to repeat in our daily prayer, "*as we forgive them that trespass against us;*" and if we do not, we thereby pronounce sentence on ourselves; for when we say forgive us, as we forgive others, if we do not forgive in reality, we are praying *do not forgive us*.

Colloquy.—O most liberal Father, from my whole heart I forgive my debtors their offences, that thou mayest forgive me what I have offended thee; for I am certain what is "*owing to me is scarce a hundred pence, whereas I owe to thee ten thousand talents* (*Matt. xviii. 28*).

CHAPTER XXVII.

SIXTH PETITION—"AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION."

I WILL consider that Christ does not tell us to ask our Father not to allow us to *be tempted*, or not to give permission to the enemy to tempt us, he pre-supposes rather that we are to be tempted, and that it is expedient for us that God should

allow it, and give permission to the tempter ; and if he give it, it will doubtless be just and useful for us, and proportionate to our strength. Wherefore we ought be prepared to endure the temptations of Satan and his agents, who live in the world, as also those assaults of our own flesh and its passions. But Christ wishes us to ask grace, that we might not be overcome, nor yield to the temptation by consenting to sin, and also that God may not suffer us to be tried by that kind of temptation, or on such occasions as he foreknows that we shall fall.

Colloquy.—O heavenly Father, look on thy child dwelling in this place of warfare, and surrounded on all sides by many enemies. I do not refuse the combat, which thou dost permit for my good, but assist me by thy grace that I come off victorious, for the victory of the child is the Father's glory.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SEVENTH PETITION—"BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL."

IN this last petition we ask to be delivered from all evil past, present, and future, both of soul and body, temporal and eternal, as far as is conducive to the good of our souls. Wherefore we ask of God to be freed from our past sins, so that he pardon them by his grace, and deliver us from all ignorance, error, calamities, and miseries which we labour under at present ; that he preserve us from those to come, especially from eternal damnation and the power of the devil—the

evil one (*Matt. xiii. 19*), from whom chiefly we desire to be delivered when we say, *Deliver us from evil*, so that neither in this nor in the future life he be suffered to have any power over us, or that we become his slaves. Hence it will be well in this petition to make some litanies, like those the Church has, so as to express the particular evils from which I wish to be delivered: “From all evil, deliver us, O Lord; from thy anger—from the spirit of fornication—from the spirit of pride, &c., deliver us, O Lord.”

§ “AMEN.”

1. Christ concludes this divine form of prayer by the word *Amen*, which means “*So be it*,” which, therefore, is to be pronounced with great affection and desire of obtaining what we ask from God; for God graciously hears the desire of the poor (*Ps. ix. 39*). We ought also to add great confidence of being heard, inasmuch as we ask those things which God prescribes us, according to the words of St. John: “This is the *confidence* which we have towards him: that whatsoever we ask according to his will, he heareth us. And we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask: we know that we have the petitions which we request of him” (*1st Epist. St. John*, v. 14, 15).

CHAPTER XXIX. THE EXCELLENCE OF THE HAIL MARY.

BY THOMAS A KEMPIS.

Now let the pious lover of thy holy name give ear. Heaven rejoices, and all the earth stands amazed, when I say *Hail Mary!* Satan is put to flight, and hell trembles with fear, when I say *Hail Mary!* The world grows vile and the flesh pines away, when I say *Hail Mary!* Sorrow leaves me and new joy returns, when I say *Hail Mary!* Sloth vanishes and my heart melts with love, when I say *Hail Mary!* Devotion increases and compunction springs up within me, hope grows strong and consolation becomes greater, when I say *Hail Mary!* The mind is renewed and the wavering affection confirmed in good, when I say *Hail Mary!* For indeed so great is the sweetness of this blessed salutation, that human language is unable to express it, but it always continues higher and deeper than all creatures can fathom. Wherefore I again humbly bend my knees to thee, most holy Virgin Mary, and say, *Hail Mary, full of grace!* Receive, my most clement lady, Holy Mary, this most devout salutation, and receive me in it, that I may have something pleasing and grateful to thee, which may inspire me with confidence in thee, which may inflame me with greater love for thee, and may preserve in me constant devotion to thy venerable name. Would that, to satisfy the desire which I feel of honouring and saluting thee with all the affections of my heart, all my members were changed into so many tongues, and every tongue into a

voice of fire, so that I might find a means of glorifying thee, O holy Mother of God, for ever and ever. Would that I may also be able to repeat this most sweet salutation of Gabriel, for all my sins whereby I have deserved wrath, and most grievously afflicted thy Son, and have so often dishonoured and offended thee also, and the whole host of heaven ; so that I may offer it a holy and pure sacrifice of prayer to atone for all the sins I have committed. I would also, since my own life is so fleeting and uncertain, that all the blessed spirits and souls of the just might repeat it to thee, O Blessed Virgin, for all my transgressions and defects, my vain, impure, and perverse thoughts, with the purest devotion and most ardent prayer ; and might repeat this salutation in thy honour a hundred times over, wherewith the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ordained to salute thee by the mouth of their ambassador, that thus I may discover in some respect an incense worthy of thee as an odour of sweetness, I who find in myself nothing good or worthy to repay thee. But even now, prostrate in thy presence, drawn by sincere devotion, and all-inflamed with the veneration of thy gracious name, I present to thee the joy thou didst feel at this salutation, when the Archangel Gabriel, being sent by God, entered the retirement of thy chamber, and reverently, on bended knees, honoured thy virginal countenance with a salutation new and unheard-of since the beginning of the world, saying, *Hail, Mary, full of grace! the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women!* Which salutation I also, after the manner of the faithful, wish to offer thee anew,

and were it in my power, I would offer it with a golden mouth ; and I desire from the bottom of my heart, that all creatures may say along with me, *Hail Mary, full of grace! the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus Christ. Amen.* This is the Angelic Salutation, formed by the institution of the Holy Ghost, and suited to thy supreme dignity and sanctity. This prayer consists of few words, but is deep in mysteries ; short in speech but broad in virtue ; sweeter than honey and more precious than gold—to be ruminated continually in the mouth of the heart—to be read and repeated most frequently with pure lips. For though it be woven with very few words, it spreads wide out into a broad torrent of heavenly sweetness. But woe to the slothful, woe to the indevout, and those who wander in this prayer, who weigh not these words, and taste not the honeyed cups of sweetness they contain ; who so often say, *Hail Mary*, without attention and reverence. O most sweet Virgin Mary, guard me against such grievous neglect and sloth, and grant me pardon of the faults I have already committed. I will be in future more devout, fervent, and attentive in saying *Hail Mary*, whether in choir, or by myself, in the garden or in the field, or in whatever other place I happen to be. And now, after this, what shall I ask of thee, my dearest Lady ? What can be better, or more useful, or more necessary for me, an unworthy sinner, than that I may find grace and favour with thee and thy most-beloved Son. I therefore implore the grace of God, through thy power and intercession, who

(as the angel declared) hast found the fulness of grace before God. No petition is dearer to me, and there is nothing I am more in need of than the grace and mercy of God. The "grace of God is sufficient for me," though I should possess nothing else. For what are all my efforts without it, yet what is impossible with its help and assistance ?

CHAPTER XXX.

ON THE NAME OF MARY.

FROM ST. BONAVENTURE* AND ST. BERNARD.†
"HAIL MARY."

THIS holiest, sweetest, worthiest name — this noble, tender, glorious name, was the most becoming our Lady the Blessed Virgin. For Mary signifies *Bitter Sea*, *Sovereign Lady*, and *Star of the Sea*. Mary, in the passion of her Son, was like a sea all bitter when the sword of sorrow pierced her soul ; hence she might well say with Ruth, "Call me not *Noemi*, that is, *Beautiful*, but call me *Mara*, that is, *Bitter*, for the Almighty hath quite filled me with bitterness" (1 Ruth, xx.). Noemi was *bitter* because deprived of her two sons by death. Noemi, *beautiful* and *bitter*, was a type of Mary, beautiful by the sanctification of the Holy Ghost, but *bitter* in the passion of her Son ; Mary's two sons were the *God-man* and *mere man*, one of whom died in body, the other died in soul ; one died by the bitter death of the cross, the other by unfaithfulness of spirit ; and therefore was Mary's

* Speculum B.V.M. (St. Bonav.)

† Homilia supra Missus est (St. Bern.).

heart filled with *bitterness*, as St. Augustine says : “ That pious Mother wailing with the most intense grief, and beating her breast, was so wearied out in every limb, and almost fainting as she went, that she scarce could reach the cross of her Son.” To Satan also, and his angels, whom she crushed, Mary is a *bitter sea*, as was the Red Sea bitter to the Egyptians, who were sunk in its waves. “ The Lord brought back the waters of the sea upon the Egyptians” (*Ex. xv. 19*). Oh! how bitter and terrible was this sea, and how bitter and terrible is Mary to the demons. “ Whence,” St. Bernard says, “ visible enemies fear not so much a multitude of camps as the invisible powers fear Mary’s name, her protection, and example ; they fly and perish *as wax before the fire*, wherever they find the frequent remembrance, devout invocation, and earnest imitation of this name.” *Mary* is also interpreted Sovereign Lady ; this title well becomes her, who is queen over angels, men, and demons. *Mary* was typified by Queen Esther, of whom we read, “ she leaned on one of her maids, and the other maid followed her lady, bearing up her flowing train (*Esth. xv. 6, 7*). The *two handmaids* of whom *Mary* is queen are the angelic and human nature. Oh, what cause of joy to wretched men, that angels have their king and queen from men ; for *Mary* is truly queen of angels. With them she associates, and on them she leans in heaven, for they all bow to her command. The maid that bears up *Mary*’s train on earth is the soul that follows her, imitating her example and her virtues. Of this Lady it is read : “ As the eyes of the handmaid in the hands of her mistress ”

(*Ps. cxii.*). Each faithful soul—nay more, the universal Church is Mary's handmaid. The eyes of the Church and of us all should ever look to Mary's hands, through which we must receive every good and offer all we do to God. Mary, in fine, is the *Star of the Sea*, that guides to the shore of their heavenly country those who sail through the sea of this life in the ship of innocence or of penance. “She is that fair and beautiful star,* elevated above the wide sea of this world, shining by her merits, enlightening by her examples. Oh, whoever you are that find yourself, in the ocean of this life, tossed amidst the storms and tempests rather than walking on dry land, turn not away your eyes from the light of this star, if you do not wish to be lost in the storm. If the winds of temptation arise, if you run on the rocks of tribulation, look up to the star—call on Mary. If you are tossed on the waves of ambition or pride, detraction or envy, look up to the star—call on Mary. If anger, or avarice, or the temptation of the flesh should have shaken the helm of your soul, look up to Mary. If, terrified by the enormity of your crimes, confused by the foulness of your conscience, alarmed by the fear of judgment, you begin to be swallowed up in the gulf of sadness, the abyss of despair, think on Mary. In danger, in distress, in doubt, think on Mary, call on Mary. Let her not depart from your lips, nor depart from your heart; and in order that you may obtain the suffrage of her prayer, do not forsake the example of her life.

* St. Bernard (whose words are read by the Church in the office of the Most *Holy Name of Mary*).

By following her you will not stray ; if you beseech her you need not despair ; if you think on her you will not wander. If she hold you, you will not fall ; if she protect you, there is nothing to fear ; if she be your guide, you will not grow weary ; if she be propitious, you will arrive in safety ; and thus find, by your own experience, how deservedly is it said, ‘ and the Virgin’s name was Mary.’ ”

CHAPTER XXXI.

“ FULL OF GRACE.”

MARY was conceived in grace, she was that “ garden enclosed”* to which the serpent never gained access ; that “ fountain sealed,”† whose pure waters were never disturbed by his foul breath. The first moment of her existence she came from her Maker’s hands in a higher degree of grace and holiness than that of all creatures united, her *foundation* being laid on the *lofty mountains* ; and as she grew in years she, like her divine Son, advanced in *grace* and wisdom, with God and men.”† To Mary apply the words of divine wisdom, “ Behold my brook became a great river, and my river came near to a sea.”§ In her conception like a little rivulet, small at first, though purer and clearer than the crystal, this brook became a noble and majestic river, full to an overflow with the living water of divine grace ; and this river came near to a sea, when Mary, chosen to be Mother of God, approached to the very ocean of all sanctity. We read in the Acts

* Canticles, iv. 12.

† Ibid.

‡ Luke, ii. 52.

§ Eccl. xxv.

of the Apostles that St. Stephen was *full of grace*,* and that the apostles were likewise *all filled with the Holy Ghost*,† but this was in a far different manner from Mary, in whom the fulness of the Deity dwelt corporally, who was overshadowed by him in conceiving, and brought forth the Son of God by his aid. “She is deservedly called *full of grace*,” says St. Jerome, “for to others grace is given in part, but the whole plenitude of grace was all at once infused into Mary; truly full of grace, through whom this divine rain of the Holy Ghost has been poured down in abundance on every creature.” She was full and laden with all the graces of heaven, which formed, as it were, a rich dowry, so as to render her worthy, in a certain manner, to be chosen the spouse of the Holy Ghost. The grace she received was in proportion to the dignity for which she was destined,‡ and as this was the greatest that was possible for a mere creature to receive, so also was the grace that fitted her for it. In fact, all the graces ever conferred on any creature were given to Mary in a far more eminent degree, for though “many daughters have gathered riches, she surpassed them all.”§ “God made an assemblage of all the waters,” says a saint, “and he called it Sea (Mare); he made a collection of all the waters of grace, and called it Mary (Maria).” “All the rivers run into the sea,” says the Holy Scripture;§ the rivers are

* Acts, vi. 8.

† Acts, ii. 4.

‡ “In Beata Virgine Matre Dei fuit gratia tali dignitati proportionata” (St. Thomas, p. q. 27).

§ 1 Eccl. vii.

the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit* “all of which run into Mary,” says St. Bonaventure. The river of the grace of angels flows into Mary, that of the grace of patriarchs and prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and virgins, flows into her ; and what wonder that all graces should have met in Mary, through whom so much grace has flowed down to men : so that she may truly say “In me is all grace of the *way* and of the *truth*, in me is all hope of *life* and of virtue ;”† in other words in her are all the grace and hope of Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life.

CHAPTER XXXII.

“ THE LORD IS WITH THEE.”

THE Lord is everywhere by his essence, by his presence, and by his power ; he is in heaven by his glory, which he communicates to the blessed ; in hell by his justice, which he exercises over the reprobate ; he is in the souls of the just by his grace, which makes them beautiful and pleasing in his eyes ; but he was with Mary in a manner altogether special and unspeakable. He was with her in the very first moment of her existence, forming her soul all pure and spotless ; for he wished not only to adorn her with every grace and virtue, but also to guard and watch over this precious treasure, assisting her by special care and familiarity. He was with her in all her faculties,

* “ He that believeth in me out of him shall flow *rivers* of living water.” Now this he said of the Spirit they should receive.

† Eccl. xxiv. 25.

directing them to himself ; in her memory, aiding it, that it might be ever mindful of him ; in her understanding, enlightening it to know him ; in her will, inflaming it to love him ; in all her powers of body and soul. The Father was with her forming her chaste womb as the fit dwelling-place of his divine Son, sharing with her the common title of parent ; the Son was with her becoming her Son, and preparing her to become his worthy mother. The Holy Ghost was with her as his future spouse, adorning her with the precious jewels of his choicest graces. "*The Lord is with thee,*" says St. Augustine, "more than with me, for he is in thy heart, he is in thy breast, he fills thy mind, he fills thy soul, he fills thy womb."* "*He did not say the Lord is in thee, but with thee,*" says St. Bernard, "for God, though everywhere by the simplicity of his substance, is in a different manner in irrational and rational creatures. He is in the good and bad by knowledge, in the good alone by love and the union of their will with his ; but he is with Mary in a special manner, with whom he unites to himself not alone her will, but even her flesh and blood ; so as from his own and her substance to make, or rather to become one Christ, who, though not *all* of God, nor all of the Virgin, was yet God's and the Virgin's—not two sons, but one son of both. *The Lord is with thee,* not only God the Son, whom thou clothest with thy own flesh, but God the Holy Ghost, of whom thou dost conceive, and God

* "In tuo corde, in tuo utero, adimplet mentem, adimplet ventrem" (St. Augustine).

the Father, who begot *him* whom thou didst conceive. The Lord, therefore, is with thee."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"BLESSED ART THOU AMONGST WOMEN."

ON one occasion when our divine Lord was preaching to the Jews, a woman from the crowd cried out: "Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the breasts that gave thee suck."* "This woman," says the Venerable Bede, "was a type† of the Catholic Church; her words have ever found an echo in the breasts of all true Christians, who, like her, fearless of dishonouring the Son by honouring the Mother in his presence, cry out in the language of the Church, 'Blessed the womb of the Virgin Mary, which bore the Son of the Eternal Father, and blessed the breasts that gave suck to Christ our Lord.'"† That poor woman mentioned in the Gospel§ had seen, no doubt, our divine Saviour perform many miracles; she had heard with delight the words of wisdom that flowed from his lips, admired the grace and dignity of all his actions, the meekness and majesty of his person, which was *beautiful in form beyond all the children of men*;|| yet singular enough she did not cry out, "Blessed those lips overspread with grace and sweetness, those hands whose touch

* Luke, xi. 27.

† "Cujus haec mulier typum gessit (Off. B. V.)

‡ Antiphon in the Office.

§ Many think she was St. Marcella, the servant of St Martha.

|| Ps. xliv. 3.

restores speech to the dumb and sight to the blind ;” nor like the Queen of Saba, on seeing the wisdom of Solomon, did she exclaim : “ *Blessed are they who stand near thee always and hear thy wisdom ;*” but, in all likelihood herself a mother, she naturally thought how blessed the womb in which such a child was conceived, the bosom on which that infant was laid, the breasts from which he received his first nourishment ; how blessed the mother who bore such a son, who nursed him in childhood, enjoyed his company in manhood, for whom he, as a dutiful son, still retained, as no doubt he ever would retain, filial affection, respect, and obedience. He whom she saw spread blessings around him must surely have reserved his choicest and dearest for *her*, and hence following the impulse of those feelings that gushed from her heart, she exclaimed, “ *Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the breasts that gave thee suck.* That voice has never died away, but is repeated daily and hourly from the lips of Catholics, as Mary herself has foretold. “ All generations shall call me blessed.”* The Archangel Gabriel was the first to address Mary with this glorious salutation, on the part of the Holy Trinity, and she was again saluted by St. Elizabeth in the same words ; “ to show that she was worthy of the veneration of men and angels,” says the venerable Bede. Mary is justly called the second Eve, as her divine Son is called the second Adam.† Eve, by her imprudence in listening to the angel of darkness, brought malediction and death on the

* Luke, i. 48.

† 1 Cor. xv. 22.

whole human race : Mary, by her prudence in believing the angel of light, brought us benediction and life in Jesus Christ. To Eve it was said *in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children*, and from her we are *born children of wrath*. From Mary we are born children of grace ; she changed the curse of Eve into a blessing, she became the Mother of *divine grace*, the *cause of our joy*, and blessed amongst women.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

“ BLESSED IS THE FRUIT OF THY WOMB.”

THESE words contain the second part of the Angelical Salutation, and were spoken by St. Elizabeth, who was inspired by God. They express the fourth privilege of Mary, and the praise given her by reason of it. For she is not alone worthy of honour and praise on account of her own sanctity and grace, but principally by reason of the blessed fruit of her womb, Jesus Christ her Son, who is the Author of all her graces and blessings. In the same manner as the illustrious qualities and endowments of the child redound to the honour and glory of the parent, and as the goodness of the tree is known by the fruits it bears, so too the perfections and privileges of the Son of God render a thousand times blessed and glorious the chaste womb that conceived him, that bore him for nine months, and brought him forth to the world. “ It is not because Mary was blessed that the fruit of her womb was blessed,” says St. Bernard, “ but because he anticipated her by the blessings of sweetness, therefore was she blessed.”

Truly blessed is the *fruit* of her womb, in which all the nations of the earth are blessed—blessed in *odour*, blessed in taste, blessed in its beauty. The fragrance of this sweet-smelling fruit was felt by Isaac when he said : “Behold the odour of my son is as the smell of a plentiful field, which the Lord hath blessed.”* Was not that truly blessed which the Lord hath blessed? One who had tasted of this fruit cried out, “Taste and see how sweet the Lord is” (*Ps.*) : and he who was himself the fruit inviting us to partake—“he that eats me shall yet hunger, and he that drinks me shall yet thirst.” He said this, no doubt, on account of the sweetness of its taste, which once felt but excites desire the more—good fruit, which is the meat and drink of those who hunger and thirst after justice. As you have heard of its sweet odour and taste, hear now of its beauty. For if the fruit of death was not alone sweet to eat, as the Scripture declares, but also fair to the eyes and delightful to behold, with much more reason ought we look for beauty on that life-giving fruit on which, as the Scripture elsewhere testifies, even angels desire to gaze, the beauty of which *he* saw in spirit, and longed to see in the flesh, who said : “Out of Sion, the loveliness of his beauty.” *Blessed, then, is the fruit of thy womb,* which God hath blessed for ever, by which thou too art blessed amongst women ; for a bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit. Blessed, I say, art thou, who hast escaped the general curse : “In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children ;” and this

* Gen. xxvii. 27.

also: "Cursed is she that is barren in Israel," and hast obtained the singular blessing that thou shouldst neither remain barren, nor yet bring forth with sorrow. Take courage then, fruitful virgin, chaste and undefiled mother: remember that Christ bore the curse of the cross, whilst he blessed you his Mother in heaven; but you are blessed on earth *also* by the angel, and you are deservedly *called blessed by all generations*. *Blessed*, therefore, art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

CHAPTER XXXV.

JESUS—ON THE HOLY NAME.

THE Church, entering into the intention of her divine spouse and Saviour, whose most ardent desire is to see his holy Mother praised and blessed by all mankind, adds the name of *Jesus* to the words of St. Elizabeth, in order to declare clearly that he is the blessed fruit of the Virgin's womb, thereby animating her children to love and venerate *her*, who is worthy of the love and praises of heaven and earth. This adorable name of Jesus embraces in a certain manner, every grace and benefit—every effort of divine love and mercy, and every mystery which we adore in the whole course of his incarnation, death, and resurrection, and ascension into heaven. For they all had *us men and our salvation** for their end and object. So that the heavenly Father in giving him this name has revealed the reason of his coming on earth, the

* The Creed.

office he was to fulfil, and all that he was to suffer for man's redemption. His life and death, his joys and sorrows, his glory and ignominy, are all but the fulfilment of this blessed and saving name. *This* accounts for and explains them all; in taking it on him he embraced by anticipation, engaged and pledged himself to endure them. If he was born in poverty, brought up in want, presented like a sinner to be circumcised, and in his after-life persecuted and condemned to the cruel death of the cross, it was all because he was *Jesus*, our Saviour. “We thought him,” says the prophet,* “as it were a leper, and one struck by God, and afflicted; but *he* was wounded for *our* iniquities, he was bruised for *our* sins; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we were healed.” This adorable name presents before the mind the glory and majesty of his divinity, the most tender and engaging charms of his humanity, all the virtues and perfections of the Man-God, for all his other qualities† either flow from, or go to make up his character of Saviour of our souls: it embraces in a single word the infinite wisdom and goodness, love and mercy, sanctity and power of God, all united and co-operating for our salvation. “But you are in Christ Jesus,” says the apostle, “who being God is made unto us wisdom and justice, and sanctification and redemption.” It comprehends, besides, all the graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost, as concurring and directed to the sanctification of our souls; for they all come to us from him, “who

* Isaias, liii

† See Alban Butler and Neut on the Mysteries.

was full of grace and truth, of whose fulness we have all received, and grace for grace." It includes, moreover, all the glorious titles under which the prophets foretold the future Messiah, besides all the endearing and amiable names by which *he* speaks of himself in the Gospel, and the apostles speak of him. How great, then, ought to be our love and devotion to this sweet and tender name, which is the memorial of all that he has done and suffered for the love of us, the very abridgment of our holy religion. "This name," as the Church says of it, "ought to be like honey in our mouths, music in our ears, and joy in our hearts;";* and had we but true love for Jesus, each of us might well say, like the great St. Bernard, "all good things are present to my mind when I hear the name of Jesus sound in my ears."†

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"HOLY MARY, MOTHER OF GOD."

THIS is the third part of the Angelic Salutation, and was added by the Church in the Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431), against the heresy of Nestorius, who asserted that the *Son of God* and the *Son of Mary* were two distinct persons. Mary is the Mother of the *Word made flesh*, who was at the same moment perfect God and perfect man; and therefore the Holy Virgin is truly Mother of him who is God and Man. "Whence is this to me," said St. Elizabeth, "that the *Mother of my Lord*

* *Mel in ore, melos in aure, jubilus in corde.*

† *Omnia bona mihi sonant cum insonuerit Jesus.*

should come to me."* Mary is holy, not alone because she was free from the slightest stain of sin, original or actual,† but also because in the very first moment of her existence she was adorned with every grace and virtue in the highest degree, so that the very heights of perfection at which the greatest saints arrived, after long lives spent in the practice of the most heroic virtues, were but the foundation, as it were, for this glorious *Tower of David*, whose summit reached to heaven. And every moment of her life she merited a new increase of grace by her faithful correspondence with the graces bestowed on her, so as to be worthy in a certain manner to become the mother of him who is the author and fountain of all grace and holiness. This was Mary's crowning glory, to become the Mother of her Creator, a dignity greater than which no creature could receive, nor even God himself bestow. "For," as St. Bonaventure says,‡ "though God could make *a greater earth and a greater heaven, yet a greater Mother than the Mother of God* he could not make."§ St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, the object of which is to show how far the New Testament established by Christ, excels the old, which was given by the ministry of angels, makes use of this argument: "Christ was made so much better than the angels, as he inherited a

* Luke, i. 43.

† "Thou art all beautiful, and there is no spot in thee" (*Canticles*).

‡ In *Spec. c. 8.*

§ St. Thomas teaches that the dignity of the Blessed Virgin is in a certain respect infinite (*Infinitam quandam dignitatem habet*).

more excellent name than they. For to which of the angels did God say at any time, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* And again, *I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son.* But to the angels, *Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire* (Heb. i. 4, &c.). And is not Mary as far superior to the angels as the name of Mother is above that of servant. For what angel could say to the Son of God, as she could on the day of his Nativity, *Thou art my Son, this day I have given thee birth;* or, as she said to him on finding him in the temple, “Son, why hast thou done so to us?” she shall be to him a Mother, and he shall be to her a Son for all eternity. By becoming Mother of God she is by right and title queen over all the subjects of her divine Son, an abyss of grace that exhausts, as it were, the whole communicable ocean of divine grace. Her blessed womb was the central point of the highest manifestations of the divine attributes, the link between the finite and the infinite, the point of contact and bond of union between God and man. She was the living tabernacle of Christ, the august sanctuary wherein his humanity was first admitted to the beatific vision, where nature, grace, and glory met together. This title of *Mother of Christ* alone consecrates and canonizes, as it were, all the aspirations of tenderness, all the inventions of gratitude, by which the Church honours on earth the queen of every virtue, so that any homage or veneration, that we can pay to her, short of divine worship, is far beneath what she deserves.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

" PRAY FOR US SINNERS, NOW AND AT THE HOUR
OF OUR DEATH. AMEN."

MARY, as Mother of God, is all-powerful* with her divine Son; her prayer and intercession have the force of a command. Her pity and compassion for sinners, on the other hand, are boundless as her power. She is called by the Church, and constituted by her divine Son, our *Gracious Advocate*, and the *Refuge of Sinners*. She is our advocate with the Son, as he is with the Father. He is our mediator of justice and redemption, she is our mediatrix of grace and intercession; like him she is *always living to make intercession for us* (*Heb. vii. 26*). "Christ, it is true," says St. Bernard,† "would be sufficient for us, for as it is, all our sufficiency is from him; but it was *not good* for us *that man should be alone*. It was more becoming that both sexes should have part in our reparation as both had in our fall." A faithful, indeed, and all-powerful mediator between God and man was the man Christ Jesus; but man stood in awe of the divine majesty that dwells in *him*. The humanity appears absorbed in the Deity; not that the substance is changed, but that it is deified by union. To *him* is sung, not mercy alone, but judgment also (*Ps. c. 1*); for though *he learned compassion by the things which he suffered, that he might become merciful*,‡

* *Omnipotentia suppliex*, and *Quod ille imperio, tu Virgo prece potes*, say the saints.

† *Hom. supra Missus est.*

‡ *Heb. ii. 17.*

he still possesses the power to judge likewise. "Our God is a consuming fire," says the Scriptures; why then should not the sinner have reason to fear that as *wax melteth before the fire, so should he perish before the presence of God?** Wherefore the woman *blessed amongst women* must now no longer remain idle, for her place shall be found in the work of reconciliation. For we have need of one to mediate with the great *Mediator*, and there is no one more fit for this office than Mary. Eve was a cruel mediatrix; through her the *Old Serpent* infused the deadly poison into man; but faithful Mary found the antidote of salvation for all, both men and women. The *one* was the agent of seduction, the *other* of propitiation; Eve suggested disobedience, Mary became the instrument of redemption. Why should human frailty fear to approach Mary? in her there is nothing to cause any fear; she is all sweet and mild, offering to all the wool and milk of human kindness. Read carefully the whole Gospel, and if you find anything harsh or repulsive, or the least sign of indignation about her, you may look on her with suspicion ever after. But if (as is really the case) you find her throughout full of compassion and gentleness, grace and piety, then thank him who, in his bountiful mercy, has provided you with such a mediatrix, in whom there can be no ground for suspicion. She opens to all the bosom of her compassion, so that all may receive of its fulness—the captive, redemption; the sick, a remedy; the sad, consolation; the sinner, par-

* Ps. lxvii. 8.

don ; the just, increase of grace ; angels, joy ; in a word, the whole Trinity, glory ; the Second Person, the substance of human flesh, so there be “ no one hidden from her heat” (*Ps. xviii. 7*).

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

DEVOUT METHOD OF RECITING THE ROSARY.

BY THE VENERABLE FR. DU PONTE, S.J.*

THE most celebrated amongst the devotions to the Most Holy Virgin is that of the *Rosary* which we have spoken of. And since vocal prayer is, then, most perfect when united with meditation, the devout clients of Mary have devised various means of uniting them both when reciting the Rosary. I will here set down three of the most useful, that each person may choose that which he finds of greater assistance in his prayer, adopting now one, now another, to prevent weariness by this holy variety. 1st. Before beginning the Rosary, I will raise my heart to the Lord our God, who is present, and I will humbly beseech him that he may assist me by his grace to say this Rosary in the manner pleasing to him, and I will offer him all my thoughts, words, affections, and actions, directing them all to his own honour and glory, and that of his holy Mother, in thanksgiving for the benefits conferred on me, in satisfaction for my sins and negligence in his service, and to obtain the virtues and graces which I stand in need of in order to serve him perfectly. But if tho

* Translated from the Latin edition by *Trevinnio, &c.*
Nordlingæ (& Romæ), 1857.

Rosary be offered for other general necessities of the Church, or any particular person, whether living or dead, such offering ought to be made here. Remark, however, that of the four ends to which I may direct my prayer (viz., the praise and glory of God for being what he is, thanksgiving for his benefits, satisfaction for my own sins, and to obtain grace and virtue), if I offer the Rosary for another person, though I may transfer to him the satisfaction which would otherwise be mine, still I can offer the same Rosary for myself (as regards the three other intentions) without detriment to him. 2nd. After I have made this offering I will say one Our Father and ten Hail Marys, slowly and attentively, not content with merely pronouncing the words correctly, but also attending to the sense and to the person to whom they are directed, which is our Lord God or the Holy Virgin ; who, though she is in heaven, sees and hears me, and understands my prayer, and I may speak to her as if she were standing beside me on earth.

Having finished this decade, I will add some short meditation according to one of the following methods :

FIRST METHOD OF SAYING THE ROSARY—BY MEDITATING ON THE WORDS “ HAIL MARY.”

The first way, then, of saying the Rosary or Chaplet, is that of praying by the words, viz., distributing the Angelic Salutation into six or seven principal words, and taking one of them for the subject of meditation in each decade. For example :

1. In the first decade take the words *Hail Mary*, and then meditate on the excellencies and privileges contained in this most sweet name of *Mary*. In the second decade take as the matter of meditation, "*full of grace*," and reflect on the immense grace and virtue with which the Holy Virgin was filled. In the third decade take the words, "*the Lord is with thee*;" in the fourth, "*Blessed art thou amongst women*;" in the fifth, "*Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus*," wherein I am to consider the excellence of the most sweet name of *Jesus*, and the heavenly blessings which, through him, are communicated to us. In the sixth decade, the meditation will be on the words, "*Holy Mary, mother of God*," pondering on the exalted dignity of the most holy Virgin in being chosen Mother of God, and the privileges granted to her on that account. Finally, as the subject for the last decade I may meditate the words, "*pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death*," weighing the power and efficacy of the Blessed Virgin's prayers, and the need I have that she should pray for me, especially at the hour of death, thinking with what affection I would say it when that hour is come. I will then endeavour to excite the same in pronouncing it now.

2. With this brief meditation various affections should be united—some to God, some to the Holy Virgin, admiring her excellence and virtues, rejoicing that she is adorned with such, but praising and glorifying God for endowing her with them, and exciting within me the desire of imitating them, and always congratulating her on each of them with the word *Hail*, which is to be repeated

at each of the other words, saying with great affection, *Hail, Mary, most holy*; thou that art full of grace, full of divine love, full of humility, who hast the Lord with thee; *Hail, thou who art the Mother of God*—who hast God for thy Son, &c. Finally, I will conclude by asking those virtues which I have considered in the Holy Virgin, or other gifts which I know to be wanting to me, offering those petitions now to Christ our Lord, through the merits of his Mother, now to the Holy Mother herself, that she may obtain them for me from her Son; and, lastly, to the other Persons of the most holy Trinity, using the titles and colloquies (spoken of). In the same manner we may sometimes take the Lord's Prayer as the matter of meditation in each decade, reflecting in the mean time on one of the seven petitions. Sometimes, also, we may take the ten verses of the "*Magnificat*," taking one or two verses for each decade, with the proper affections.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

SECOND METHOD OF RECITING THE ROSARY—BY MEDITATION ON THE FIFTEEN MYSTERIES.

THE *second* method, and that which is generally adopted in saying the Rosary, is to take for the subject of meditation the fifteen Mysteries of Christ our Lord and his most holy Mother, taking for each decade one of the fifteen Mysteries, which are distinguished into three classes, viz. :

The *first* called the *Joyful Mysteries*, from the singular joy which they caused to the Blessed Virgin, and are the Annunciation, the Visitation of

the Holy Virgin to St. Elizabeth, the Nativity of Christ our Lord, his Presentation, and Finding in the temple amidst the doctors. And as each mystery embraces several points, lest, when combined, meditating on the same subject might cause weariness, it will be useful to take one point each day until all those assigned be gone through.

The *second class* is called *Sorrowful*, because of the extreme sorrow which they caused to Christ and his ever-blessed Mother, whether she was present as they took place, or heard and considered them. These are, the *Prayer of Christ in the garden*, with his sadness and bloody sweat, the *Scourging at the pillar*, the *Crowning with thorns*, the *Carrying of the Cross*, and the *Crucifixion*.

The *third class* is called the *Glorious Mysteries*, which contain the glory of Christ after his passion, also the glory of his Blessed Mother. These are, the *Resurrection of Christ*, his *Ascension*, and sitting at the right hand of the Father, the *Coming of the Holy Ghost*, the *Assumption of the Blessed Virgin*, and her glorious *Coronation* in heaven.

This much premised, there are three things to be performed in each decade.

First, call to mind the mystery, or some part of it, briefly meditating and considering the perfections of Christ our Lord and his Holy Mother, and what they do or suffer in it—the sorrow, joy, or glory which they receive, the heroic virtues they practise, the great blessings which are thence derived to all mankind, and to myself in particular, considering the special reasons which I have to feel joy, sorrow, or exultation on the things set before me in these mysteries. And I may re-

main in this kind of reflection longer or shorter, according to the devotion I feel, or the time I may have at command, endeavouring always to pass on to the second part of the meditation, which is the more important. *Then* the will is to be moved to form those affections of joy, or sorrow, or delight to which the mystery inclines, making affectionate colloquies, now with Christ our Lord, now with his Blessed Mother, or with the Holy Trinity.

If the mystery be *joyful*, for example, the Incarnation, I may exercise these affections so as to dwell on them with an interior relish or feeling, thus: "I give thee thanks, O eternal Father, because thou didst will thy beloved Son to become man for us. I rejoice at thy infinite goodness, love, and mercy, which thou hast manifested in this great work. Would that all the world might praise and glorify thee for it. O divine Word, I give thee thanks for having chosen the most holy Virgin as thy Mother, and becoming an infant in her womb. O most holy Virgin, I rejoice that thou wert chosen to be the Mother of God, and at the great joy with which thou wert filled on hearing this glad tidings from the mouth of the glorious Archangel. I rejoice also at the prudence, chastity, humility, and most perfect resignation thou didst show on receiving this divine message. Oh, that I might obtain some share in your joys, and imitate your virtues. Obtain for me, most gracious Mother, what I desire, that when I obtain it I may be devout in thy service. Amen.

But if it be one of the *sorrowful* mysteries, then we should exercise affections of sorrow,

according to what has been said. In that of Christ's sorrow *in the garden*, I may say, I give thee thanks, eternal Father, because thou didst will thine only Son to endure such sadness and anxiety of soul, as the remedy for my offences. O my Saviour, I am grieved at seeing thee so sorrowful and afflicted, and sweating blood, to cleanse me from my sins. O my sins, which so much afflict God himself! Would that I had never sinned, never given cause for such grievous torments! I am exceedingly sorry, O my God, for offending thee, and I desire to feel sorrow like thine, and to shed abundant tears for my sins, for which *thou* didst shed thy blood. O holy Virgin, how great was thy grief at knowing that which afflicted thy Son in the garden! O what did you feel at our sins, when you thought on what your Son suffered for them! Beseech him, then, that he make me sharer in those sorrows, for it is just that he who is guilty should endure the punishment.

In the same manner I may form affections and colloquies in the other mysteries, adding this, however, in the *third* place, namely to propose to our blessed Lord and his holy Mother the necessities and miseries under which I labour, and to seek a remedy for them by alleging as my claim and title for being heard, the joy or sorrow which *they* felt in this mystery, making a resolute and firm purpose to imitate some of the virtues of the holy Virgin herself.

But if any one, from want of time, or other cause, is unable to remain in meditation on the mystery, it will be sufficient, after each decade, to

call to mind the mystery, and to make a short colloquy and petition to the Blessed Virgin herself, saying :

I rejoice, O Sovereign Lady, at the great joy thou didst feel in this mystery, by which I humbly implore that thou obtain for me the pardon of my sins, and the grace to imitate thy virtues. And the same is to be done in the *joyous* and *glorious* mysteries, after their proper manner. Thus : I am grieved, my Sovereign Lady, at the sorrow thou didst feel on my account. Or, I rejoice at that joy and glory with which thou wert filled in this mystery, by reason of which I humbly beseech, &c.

Having ended this brief prayer on one mystery, as was remarked, we are to go on to the vocal prayer, by reciting one decade. But if the heart feel attracted to the former motion or affection, we may allow it to remain on it ; for affections of this kind are not opposed to the intention required in vocal prayer, but rather assist it in a wonderful manner.

EXAMINATION TO BE MADE AFTER RECITING THE ROSARY.

After having said the Rosary, I am to examine for a short time the manner I went through it, and to feel sorry for any distraction, or dryness, or other defect I may be guilty of, returning God thanks for any pious affection he has given me, and resolving, in fine, to recite it with greater fervour and devotion on the following day.

We may add, in fine, that though the Mysteries of the Rosary be reduced to fifteen, we may at

times, however, in place of those above-named, take others similar which have some relation or connexion with them. As to the Joyful Mysteries, we may sometimes add the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, *her* nativity, and presentation in the Temple, the circumcision of the child Jesus, the adoration of the Magi, the flight into, and return from, Egypt. To the *Sorrowful Mysteries* may be added the apprehending of Christ, the blows he received in the house of Annas, the sorrows he endured on the night of his Passion in the house of Caiphas, the contempt he was treated with by Herod, the people preferring Barabbas to him. At times, too, we may take the seven last words that Christ spoke on the cross, meditating on one of them at each decade, and considering what the Blessed Virgin's feelings were while she heard them spoken.

THE THIRD MANNER OF RECITING THE ROSARY—BY
MEDITATING ON THE VIRTUES OF THE BLESSED
VIRGIN.

The principal thing by which we ought to prove our devotion to the Holy Virgin is the imitation of her heroic virtues, and for this end it will be of great assistance to make *them* the subject of our meditation in reciting the Rosary, assigning one virtue to each decade, *e.g.*, to one her humility, another her purity, a third her obedience, patience, or charity, and so with the rest, keeping meantime the eyes of the soul and the intention fixed on three things.

1st. On the heroic acts that the Blessed Virgin

practised in the exercise of that virtue, admiring her sanctity and rejoicing in it, glorifying God, who endowed her with it, and exulting at the reward bestowed on her for that virtue.

2nd. I will turn my eyes to the want of this virtue which I perceive in myself, and on the opposite defects and offences into which I fall, conceiving great confusion and humiliation for them, repenting and beseeching the Holy Virgin to obtain pardon for the past, and the grace of amendment for the future.

3rd. I will form serious resolutions, to the best of my power, to imitate her in those acts of virtue, selecting for this end some one virtue in particular, whose acts I am to practise with great confidence, that I will be able to do so with the aid and intercession of this most pious Mother.

It will be of great advantage in this form of meditation to know the special virtues of the Blessed Virgin which have been treated of in the foregoing meditations, and in those on her presentation and purification, wherein we have laid down six, like the six white leaves of the lily, with the six golden shoots of interior affections which shone forth in her, which affections we may meditate on when we recite the Chaplet.

A SHORT AND EASY METHOD OF SAYING THE ROSARY.

It is a good practice, recommended by experience, to express the mystery we are meditating on, in the middle of each *Hail Mary*, immediately after the name of *Jesus*. This may be done in various ways, according to each one's devotion; and it will serve much to increase that devotion, if in expressing what was done, we add, that it was done *for us, for our instruction or consolation, &c.,* as the mystery may suggest. For example, in the First *Joyful Mystery*, after the word *Jesus* in the *Hail Mary*, say, *who was made Man for us,* and then continue, *Holy Mary, Mother of God, &c.* In the *Second Mystery* say, *who sanctified St. John in his mother's womb for us.* In the *Third*, *who was born in a stable for us.* In the *Fourth*, *who was presented in the temple for us.* In the *Fifth*, *who was found in the temple about his Father's business, for our instruction.* (2). In the First *Sorrowful Mystery*, say, *who suffered his agony and bloody sweat for us.* In the *Second*, *who was scourged at the pillar for us.* In the *Third*, *who was crowned with thorns for us.* In the *Fourth*, *who carried his cross for us.* In the *Fifth*, *who was crucified for us.* In the First *Glorious Mystery*, say, *who rose from the dead for our justification.* In the *Second*, *who ascended into heaven for us.* In the *Third*, *who sent down his Holy Spirit for our sanctification.* In the *Fourth*, *who took thee (the Blessed Virgin) body and soul into heaven for our consolation.* In the *Fifth*, *who crowned thee Queen of all the elect for our sake.*

ROSARY OF The Blessed Virgin Mary.

IN the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

V. Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

R. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

V. Thou, O Lord, will open my lips.

R. And my tongue shall announce thy praise.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be the Father, &c.

R. As it was in the beginning, &c.

Alleluia.

From Septuagesima to Easter, instead of Alleluia, say :

Praise be to thee, O Lord, King of eternal glory.

[The fifteen mysteries are divided into three parts, viz., five joyful, five sorrowful, and five glorious mysteries. Now the method consists in raising corresponding affections in the will, during the recital of each Decade, such as the devotion of each one may suggest; for example, in the first part, sentiments of joy for the coming of our Redeemer; in the second, of compassion for the sufferings of our Lord, and contrition for our sins, which were the occasion of them; in the third, of thanksgiving for the exaltation of the glory of our Saviour, and his blessed Mother, hoping, through the merits of his passion and her intercession, to be made partakers of their glory.]

The Joyful Mysteries.

FIRST.—THE ANNUNCIATION.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate, in this mystery, how the angel Gabriel saluted our Blessed Lady with the title, “Full of Grace,” and declared unto her the Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O Holy Mary, Queen of Virgins, through the most high mystery of the Incarnation of thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, wherein our salvation was begun, obtain for us, through thy most holy intercession, light to understand the greatness of the benefit he hath bestowed upon us, in vouchsafing to become our brother, and giving thee, his own beloved Mother, to be our Mother also. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—HUMILITY.—Humble yourself frequently by considering your nothingness, your sins and miseries. Be willing that others despise you. Patiently bear with any contempt you may meet with.

Aspiration.—“To thee, O Lord, be glory and honour : to us, shame and confusion.”

PATRON.—

By th’ Archangel’s word of love,*
That announc’d Thee from above ;
By the grace of Mary given,
By thy first descent from heaven.

Child of Mary, hear our cry,
Thou wert helpless once as we ;
Now enthroned in majesty,
Countless angels sing to Thee.

* “Hymns for the Year.”—(Burns and Lambert).

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

"The Angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee called Nazareth, to a Virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the Virgin's name was Mary. And the Angel being come in said unto her : Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee : Blessed art thou among women. . . . Behold thou shalt conceive, and shalt bring forth a son. . . . And Mary said : Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word" (*Luke*, i. 26, &c.).

AID TO MEDITATION: FROM THE SAINTS, ETC.

"O venerable Virginity! O wonderful humility! The Angel calls Mary Mother of God, and she calls herself handmaid of Christ" (*St. Augustine*). "O truly blessed humility, which gave God to men, life to mortals, purified the world, opened Paradise, and freed from hell the souls of men" (*St. Augustine*). "God hath regard to the humility rather than to the virginity of his handmaid" (*St. Bernard*). "God could make a greater heaven, and a greater earth, but greater than the Mother of God he could not make" (*St. Bonaventure*).

SECOND JOYFUL MYSTERY.—THE VISITATION.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate, in this mystery, how the Blessed Virgin Mary, understanding from the angel that her cousin, St. Elizabeth, had conceived, went with haste into the mountains of Judea to visit her, bearing her divine Son within her womb, and remained with her three months.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O holy Virgin, most spotless mirror of humility, by that exceeding charity which moved thee to visit thy holy cousin St. Elizabeth, obtain for us, through thine intercession, that our hearts being visited by thy divine Son, and freed from all sin, we may praise and give thanks to him for ever. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—CHARITY.—Be particularly careful not to say nor listen to anything against your neighbour's character. Let no day pass without showing him your charity, by some little service.

Aspiration.—“ O Lord, enkindle in our hearts the fire of thy charity.”

PATRON.—

By that journey made in haste
O'er the desert mountain waste :
By that voice whose heavenly tone
Thrill'd the Baptist in the womb ;

Child of Mary, &c.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

“ And Mary rising up in those days, went into the hill country with haste into a city of Juda. And she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass : that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb” (*Luke*, i. 39, &c.).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

“ We ought to love our neighbours in heart, word, and deed. Mary had this charity in her heart, urged by it *she went into the hill country with haste*. For what made her haste to this duty of charity, but the love that burned in her own heart. She showed charity in her words also, for of her it is said, ‘*And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary.*’ She had charity not alone on her lips, but she practised it in her actions ; for we read, ‘*Mary remained with her (Elizabeth) about three months.*’ She remained to serve and comfort Elizabeth” (*St. Bonav.*). “ This is she at the sweet voice of whose salutation the babe unborn exults with joy in his mother’s womb” (*St. Bernard*).

THIRD JOYFUL MYSTERY.—THE NATIVITY.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the Blessed Virgin Mary, when the time of her delivery was come, brought forth our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, at midnight, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for him in the inns at Bethlehem.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O most pure Mother of God, through thy virginal and most joyful delivery, whereby thou gavest to the world thy only Son, our Saviour, we beseech thee obtain for us, through thine intercession, the grace to lead such pure and holy lives in this world, that we may become worthy to sing, without ceasing, the mercies of thy Son, and his benefits to us, by thee. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—DISENGAGEMENT.—Every day visit the Blessed Sacrament for five minutes as another Bethlehem, and there disengage your heart from family, friends, goods, &c.

Aspiration.—“What have I in heaven, or on earth, but thee, my God?”

PATRON.—

By thy poor and lowly lot,
By the manger and the grot;
By thy tender feet and hands
Folded in their swathing bands;
Child of Mary, &c.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

" And Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city, of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem : because he was of the house and family of David. To be enrolled with Mary, his espoused wife, who was with-child. And it came to pass, that when they were there, her days were accomplished, that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped him up in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger : because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds watching, and keeping the night watches over their flock. And behold an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round about them, and they feared with a great fear. And the angel said to them : Fear not ; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people : For this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you, you shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and laid in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God, and saying : Glory to God in the highest : and on earth peace to men of good will" (*Luke*, ii. 4-14).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

" A child is born to us, and a Son is given to us. The Father of the world to come, the Prince of peace The Lamb, the Ruler of the earth" (*Isaias*, ix. 6, and xvi. 1). " There is no place for sorrow on this birthday of Life. All have the same cause to rejoice ; for our divine Lord, the destroyer of sin and death, is come to deliver all mankind from their slavery. Let the saint rejoice for his reward is at hand ; let the sinner rejoice, for he is invited to pardon ; let the unbeliever take courage, for he is called to life ; there is no one excluded from sharing in the common joy. Let us then give thanks to God the Father through his divine Son, who, from the excessive love which he bore us, took compassion on us. Acknowledge, O Christians, your dignity, and now that you are made partakers of the divine nature, beware of returning to your former vileness by an unworthy life" (*The Church*).

FOURTH JOYFUL MYSTERY.—THE PRESENTATION.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate in this mystery how the most Blessed Virgin Mary, on the day of her purification, presented the child Jesus in the temple, where holy Simeon, giving thanks to God, with great devotion, received him into his arms.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O Holy Virgin, and admirable mistress and patroness of obedience, who didst present in the temple the Lord of the temple, obtain for us, of thy beloved Son, that with holy Simeon and devout Anna, we may praise and glorify him for ever. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue.—PURITY OF INTENTION.—Never do or say anything through *human respect*, or to please yourself. Whether you eat or drink, or whatever else you do, let all tend to the greater glory of God.

Aspiration.—“To the King of Ages, immortal and invisible, be all honour and glory.”

PATRON.—

By the joy of Simeon blest,
When he clasped thee to his breast;
By the widow'd Anna's song
Pour'd amid the wondering throng.

Child of Mary, &c.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

"And after the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they carried him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord. . . . And to offer a sacrifice according as it is written in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons. And behold there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was in him. . . . And he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when his parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, He also took him into his arms, and blessed God and said: Now thou dost dismiss thy servant. O Lord, according to thy word in peace. . . . And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary his mother: behold this child is set for the fall, and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted, and thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed" (*Luke*, ii. 22, 35).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

"I rejoiced at the things that were said to me: we shall go into the house of the Lord" (*Ps. cxxi*). "We have received thy mercy, O God, in the midst of thy temple" (*Ps. xlvi. 10*). "The Lord whom we seek, and the angel of the testament whom we desire, shall come to his temple" (*Malac. iii. 1*) "Grace had made Mary superior to the law; humility made her subject to it" (*St. Augustine*). "You ought to show how much you love God by your love of the law of God" (*Ib.*). "Offer thy Son, O sacred Virgin; present the blessed fruit of thy womb to the Lord; offer him for our reconciliation, as a victim holy and pleasing to God" (*St. Bernard*). "How sweet to consider the Holy Virgin, with the little infant Jesus whom she goes to present at the temple, with that pair of doves, happier, as it seems to me, than the greatest princes of the world, to have been sacrificed for the Saviour! Who will give us the grace that our hearts may be so one day! Is not Simeon very glorious in being permitted to embrace that divine infant? Let us embrace him also, and live and die in his sweet embraces" (*St. Francis De Sales*).

FIFTH JOYFUL MYSTERY.—THE FINDING IN THE
TEMPLE.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate in this mystery, how the Blessed Virgin Mary, after having lost her beloved Son in Jerusalem, sought him for the space of three days ; and at length found him in the temple, in the midst of the doctors, disputing with them, being of the age of twelve years.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O most Blessed Virgin, more than martyr in thy sufferings, and yet the comfort of such as are afflicted, by that unspeakable joy, wherewith thy soul was filled, when at length thou didst find thy well-beloved Son in the temple, teaching in the midst of the doctors ; obtain of him that we may so seek him and find him in his holy Catholic Church, as never more to be separated from him. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—OBEDIENCE.—Obey your parents and confessor, and other superiors exactly. Be docile to good advice, and pliant to the will of others.

Aspiration.—“ Jesus, most obedient, deliver us from all self-will.”

PATRON.—

By our Lady's glad delight,
In the temple, at the sight
Of her Child so young and fair
Wiser than the wisest there :

Child of Mary, &c.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

"And when he was twelve years old, they going up into Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. And having fulfilled the days, when they returned, the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not. And thinking that he was in the company, they came a day's journey, and sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And not finding him, they returned into Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his wisdom and his answers. And seeing him they wondered. And his mother said to him : Son, why hast thou done so to us ? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said to them : How is it that you sought me ? did you not know, that I must be about my Father's business ? And they understood not the word that he spoke unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth : and was subject to them. And his mother kept all these words in her heart" (*Luke*, ii. 42—51).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

"*Son, why hast thou done so to us ?* Which of the angels could speak to him in this manner ? They look on it as a great honour, that being spirits by nature, they are called and made angels by grace : 'He who makes his spirits angels.' But Mary knowing that she is mother, familiarly calls her Son that majesty whom they serve with fear and awe. *He was subject to them*—Who ? To whom ? God, to men. God, whom the principalities and powers obey, was subject to Mary, and even to Joseph for Mary's sake. Admire then, both these, and chose which to admire the most—the all-bountiful condescension of the Son, or the most sublime dignity of the Mother" (*St. Bernard*).

The Dolorous or Sorrowful Mysteries.

For Tuesdays and Fridays throughout the Year, and on the Sundays in Lent.

FIRST.—THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate, in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus was so afflicted for us in the garden of Gethsemane, that his body was bathed in a bloody sweat, which ran down in great drops to the ground.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O most holy Virgin, more than Martyr, by that ardent prayer which our beloved Saviour poured forth to his heavenly Father in the garden, vouchsafe to intercede for us, that, our passions being reduced to the obedience of reason, we may always, and in all things, conform and subject ourselves to the holy will of God. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY

Virtue—RESIGNATION.—Receive every annoyance and affliction as coming from the hand of God; keep yourself resigned to his good pleasure in all things.

Aspiration.—“Lord, not my will, but thine be done.”

PATRON.—

By the blood that flowed from thee
In thy grievous agony;
By the traitor’s guileful kiss,
Filling up thy bitterness;

Jesus Saviour, hear our cry:
Thou wert suff’ring once as we,
Now enthroned in majesty
Countless angels sing to thee.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

"And going out he went according to his custom to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples also followed him. And when he was come to the place, he said to them: Pray, lest ye enter into temptation. And when he was withdrawn away from them a stone's cast: and kneeling down he prayed, Saying: Father, if thou wilt, remove this chalice from me: but yet not my will, but thine be done. And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony, he prayed the longer. And his sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow. And he said to them: Why sleep you? arise, pray, lest you enter into temptation. As he was yet speaking, behold a multitude: and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near to Jesus for to kiss him. And Jesus said to him: Judas, dost thou betray the son of man with a kiss?" (*Luke*, xxii. 39—48).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

"Oh! all you that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow" (*Lament.* i.). "Father, if thou wilt remove this chalice from me: But yet not my will, but thine be done" (*Luke*, xxii. 42). "This garden was the counterpart of the garden of Paradise, as there every evil had its beginning, so here Christ enters on his passion" (*St. Cyril*). "Christ seems to weep not alone with his eyes, but to shed tears from every member of his body" (*St. Bernard*). "Jesus praying with the sweat of blood, signified that from his whole body would emanate the martyrs' sufferings" (*St. Augustine*).

SECOND SORROWFUL MYSTERY.—THE SCOURGING OF JESUS AT THE PILLAR.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate, in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ, being delivered by Pilate up to the fury of the Jews, was by them most cruelly scourged at a pillar.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O mother of God, overflowing fountain of patience, by those stripes thy only and most beloved Son vouchsafed to suffer for us, obtain of him for us the grace that we may know how to mortify our rebellious senses, and to cut off all occasions of sinning by that sword of grief and compassion which pierced thy most tender soul. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—MORTIFICATION.—Mortify your curiosity and contradict your own will daily; deny yourself occasionally something at meals.

Aspiration.—“Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, make me truly mortified.”

PATRON.—

By the cords that, round thee cast,
Bound thee to the pillar fast;
By the scourge so meekly borne,
By the purple robe of scorn.

Jesus, Saviour, &c.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

"And Pilate calling together the chief priests, and the magistrates, and the people, said to them: You have presented unto me this man, as one that perverteth the people, and behold I, having examined him before you, find no cause in this man in those things wherein you accuse him. No, nor Herod neither. For I sent you to him, and behold, nothing worthy of death is done to him. I will chastise him therefore, and release him" (*Luke*, xxiii. 13—16). "And so Pilate being willing to satisfy the people, released to them Barabbas, and delivered up Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified" (*Mark*, xv. 15).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

"There is no beauty in him, nor comeliness, and we have seen him, and there was no sightliness" (*Is.* liii. 2). "We thought him as it were a leper, and one struck by God" (*Ib.* v. 4). "For thee he hath suffered all the torture, and scourges, the opprobrium of the cross, and death itself; for which of these was due to him who was the Just one" (*St. Augustine*). "O wonderful condescension of thy mercy in our regard! O inestimable love of charity! To redeem a slave thou hast delivered up thy Son" (*The Church on Holy Saturday*). "The virgin body of Jesus first appears all livid, and then begins to send forth blood from every member. The executioners continue, without mercy, to lash the wounds already inflicted, and to add pain to pain. In his scourging, Jesus certainly thought on thee. O God, had he borne but a single stripe for thee, thou shouldst burn with love for him" (*St. Liguori*).

THIRD SORROWFUL MYSTERY.—THE CROWNING
WITH THORNS.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate in this mystery, how those cruel ministers of Satan platted a crown of sharp thorns, and cruelly pressed it on the Sacred Head of our Lord Jesus Christ.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O Mother of our eternal Prince, the King of Glory, by those sharp thorns where-with his Sacred Head was pierced, we beseech thee obtain through thy intercession, that we may be delivered from all motions of pride, and escape that shame which our sins deserve at the day of judgment. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—PATIENCE.—If assailed by impatience, restrain it instantly. Daily produce three acts of mildness and patience.

Aspiration.—“Lord, your thorns are my roses, and your sufferings my paradise.”

PATRON.—

By the thorns that crown'd thy head ;
By thy sceptre of a reed ;
By thy foes on bending knee,
Mocking at thy royalty ;
Jesus, Saviour, &c.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

"Then therefore Pilate took Jesus and scourged him. And the soldiers platting a crown of thorns, put it upon his head: and they put on him a purple garment. And they came to him, and said: Hail, king of the Jews: and they gave him blows. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith to them: Behold I bring him forth unto you, that you may know that I find no cause in him. (Jesus therefore came forth bearing the crown of thorns, and the purple garment). And he saith to them: Behold the Man" (*John*, xix. 1-5). "And platting a *crown of thorns*, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand; and bowing the knee before him, they mocked him, saying: Hail, king of the Jews" (*Matt.* xxvii. 23).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

"We have seen him, and there was no sightliness, that we should be desirous of him: Despised and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity: and his look was as it were hidden and despised, whereupon we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows: and we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted" (*Isaias*, liii. 2-4). "Though they did not believe, yet God was not deprived of his honour; he is saluted as king, adored as Lord and God" (*St. Ambrose*). "His opprobrium took away ours, his chains made us free; by his *crown of thorns* we have obtained a kingdom and a diadem; by his wounds we were healed" (*St. Jerome*). "That Sacred Head is pierced, covered with thorns, and suffers the painful crown; but in these very thorns Christ washed out our sins" (*St. Chrysostom*). "There is nothing that takes out the roots of pleasure so much as the remembrance of the wounds of Christ, who was scourged, spit upon, and crowned with thorns" (*St. Peter Damian*).

FOURTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY—CARRYING THE CROSS.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate in this mystery how our Lord Jesus Christ (being sentenced to die) bore with great patience the cross, which was laid upon him for his greater torment and ignominy.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O Holy Virgin, example of patience, by the most painful carrying of the cross, on which thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, bore the heavy weight of our sins, obtain for us of him, by thy intercession, courage and strength to follow his steps, and bear our cross after him to the end of our lives. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—ANGELICAL PURITY.—Fly all occasions dangerous to *holy purity*. Guard your senses, and restrain every idea ever so remotely hurtful to it.

Aspiration.—“Jesus, lover of chastity, have mercy on us.”

PATRON.—

By the people’s cruel jeers ;
By the holy woman’s tears ;
By thy footsteps faint and slow,
Weigh’d beneath thy cross of woe ;
Jesus, Saviour, &c.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

“ Then, therefore, he delivered him to them for to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him forth. And bearing his own cross, he went forth to that place which is called Calvary, but in Hebrew Golgotha” (*John*, xix. 16, 17). “ And there followed him a great multitude of people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them, said: Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. And there were also two other malefactors led with him to be put to death” (*Luke*, xxiii. 27, 28, 32).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

“ After they had mocked him, they took off the cloak from him, and put on him his own garments, and led him away to crucify him” (*Matt.* xxvii. 31). “ Suffering is the road to salvation, and it is the cross that gains the kingdom” (*St. Basil*). “ The glory of the Saviour is the gibbet of his triumph; he is crucified as man, but glorified as God” (*St. Jerome*). “ O good cross! long wished-for, and desired with all the ardour of my soul” (*St. Andrew the Apostle*). “ Christ chose the last description of punishment, that the martyrs might fear no kind of death” (*St. Augustine*).

FIFTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY.—THE CRUCI-FIXION.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate in this mystery how our Lord Jesus Christ, being come to Mount Calvary, was stripped of his clothes, and his hands and feet most cruelly nailed to the cross, in the presence of his most afflicted Mother.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O holy Mary, Mother of God, since the body of thy beloved Son was for us extended on the cross, may our desires be daily expanded in his service; and may our hearts be wounded with compassion for his most bitter passion; and thou, O most Blessed Virgin, vouchsafe to negotiate for and with us the work of our salvation, by thy powerful intercession. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—COMPUNCTION.—Every day at noon represent to yourself our Lord crucified, and reflecting that your sins are the cause of his sufferings, declare your sorrow, and promise never to offend him more.

Aspiration.—“O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”

PATRON.—

By thy weeping mother's woe;
By the sword that pierced her through;
When in anguish standing by,
On the cross she saw thee die;

Jesu, Saviour, &c.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

"And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, they crucified him there; and the robbers, one on the right hand and the other on the left" (*Luke*, xxiii. 33). "And Pilate wrote a title also: and he put it upon the Cross. And the writing was, *Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews*. . . . Now there stood by the Cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen. When Jesus therefore had seen his mother and the disciple standing, whom he loved, he saith to his mother: Woman, behold thy son. After that he saith to the disciple: Behold thy mother. And from that hour the disciple took her to his own" (*John*, xix. 19, 25, 26, 27).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting" (*John*, iii. 14, 15). "And I, if I be lifted up out of the earth, will draw all things to myself" (*John*, xii. 32). "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world" (*Gal.* vi. 14). "The cross is the source of life, the Christian's hope, the resurrection of the dead, the guide of the blind, the consolation of the poor, and the tree of life everlasting" (*St. Chrysostom*). "The Cross of Christ is the key of Paradise" (*St. John Damascene*). "Never let the image of Christ crucified leave your mind; let it be your meat and drink, your desire and meditation, your prayer and contemplation" (*St. Bernard*). "Oh, unspeakable power of the Cross! it is the fountain of benediction, and the cause of all graces" (*St. Leo*).

The Glorious Mysteries.

For Wednesdays and Saturdays throughout the year, and Sundays after Easter until Advent.

FIRST.—THE RESURRECTION.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate in this mystery how our Lord Jesus Christ, triumphing gloriously over death, rose again the third day, immortal and impassible.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O glorious Virgin, by that unspeakable joy thou didst receive in the resurrection of thy only beloved Son, we beseech thee obtain of him for us, that our hearts may never go astray after the false joys of this world, but may be ever and wholly employed in the pursuit of the only true and solid joys of heaven. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—**LIVELY FAITH.**—Reflect for five minutes on death and the nothingness of all that passes with time. Act in all things like one convinced that nothing is truly great but what is eternal.

Aspiration.—“My Lord and my God!”

PATRON.—

By the first bright Easter day,
When the stone was roll'd away.
By the glory round thee shed,
At thy rising from the dead,

King of Glory hear our cry,
Make us soon thy joy to see,
Where enthroned in majesty,
Countless angels sing to thee.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

“ And in the end of the Sabbath, when it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalen and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And behold there was a great earthquake. For an angel of the Lord descended from heaven : and coming, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. And his countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow” (*Matt. xxviii. 1, 2, 3*). “ And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed with a white robe : and they were astonished. Who saith to them : be not affrighted ; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified : he is risen, he is not here, behold the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee ; there you shall see him, as he told you” (*Mark, xvi. 5—7*).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

“ As Christ is risen from the dead, so we also may walk in newness of life” (*Rom. vi. 4*). “ Therefore if you be risen with Christ seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God ; mind the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth. . . . When Christ shall appear, who is your life, then you also shall appear with him in glory” (*Colossians, iii. 1, 4*). “ Christ hath risen, let all the world rejoice ; for as all creation was filled with weeping and mourning at the death of the Creator, let it now be filled with joy at his triumphant return from the dead” (*St. Augustine*).

SECOND GLORIOUS MYSTERY.—THE ASCENSION.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate in this mystery how our Lord Jesus Christ, forty days after his resurrection, ascended into heaven, attended by angels, in sight of his most Holy Mother, and his apostles and disciples, to the great admiration of them all.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O Mother of God, comfort of the afflicted, as thy beloved Son, when he ascended into heaven, lifted up his hands, and blessed his apostles, so vouchsafe, most holy Mother, to lift up thy pure hands to him for us, that we may enjoy the benefit of his blessing here on earth, and hereafter in heaven. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—CHRISTIAN HOPE.—Entertain for God the sentiments of a child towards his parent, *the sweetest hope and confidence*, and with this feeling often raise your mind to him in heaven.

Aspiration—“In thee, O Lord, have I hoped; let me never be confounded.”

PATRON.—

By thy parting blessing given
As thou didst ascend to heaven;
By the cloud of living light
That received thee out of sight.

King of glory, &c.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

"Now whilst they were speaking these things, Jesus stood in the midst of them, and saith to them: peace be to you; it is I, fear not. But they being troubled and frightened, supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them: why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See my hands and feet, that it is I myself; handle and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. . . . And he led them out as far as Bethania: and lifting up his hands he blessed them. And it came to pass, whilst he blessed them, he departed from them, and was carried up to heaven. And they adoring went back into Jerusalem with great joy. And they were always in the temple praising and blessing God" (*Luke*, xxiv. 36, 51).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

"He that descended is the same also that ascended above all the heavens, that he might fill all things" (*Ephes.* iv. 10). "Having therefore a great high priest that hath passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God; let us hold fast our confession. . . . Jesus is entered *for us*. . . . He is entered into heaven itself that he may appear now in the presence of God *for us*" (*Heb.* iv. 14; vi. 20; ix. 24). "If we faithfully—if we devoutly celebrate the ascension of our Lord, let us ascend in heart with him, that when ~~the~~ looked-for day shall come, we may follow him in body also. . . . We must know that with Christ there ascends no pride, or avarice, or lust; no vice of ours ascends with our Physician" (*St. Augustine*). "For this end did Christ ascend into heaven that he might lift up man's heart to his love" (*St. Bernard*).

THIRD GLORIOUS MYSTERY.—DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate, in this mystery, how our Lord Jesus Christ, being seated on the right hand of God, sent, as he had promised, the Holy Ghost upon his Apostles, who, after he ascended, returning to Jerusalem, continued in prayer and supplication with the Blessed Virgin Mary, expecting the performance of his promise.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O sacred Virgin, Tabernacle of the Holy Ghost, we beseech thee obtain, by thy intercession, that this most sweet Comforter, whom thy beloved Son sent down upon his apostles, filling them thereby with spiritual joy, may teach us in this world the true way of salvation, and make us walk in the paths of virtue and good works. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—ZEAL FOR SOULS.—Instruct some ignorant person, or offer daily, for the conversion of sinners and propagation of the faith, the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

Aspiration.—“Send forth thy spirit, O Lord, and they shall be created, and thou wilt renew the face of the earth.”

PATRON.—

By that rushing sound of might
Coming down from heaven’s height;
By the cloven tongues of fire,
Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire.

King of glory, &c

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

"And when the days of the Pentecost were accomplished, they were all together in one place: And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak" (*Acts*, ii. 1, 4).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

"The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatever I shall have said to you" (*John*, xiv. 26). "And when he is come he will convince the world of sin, and of justice, and of judgment. . . . He shall teach you all truth" (*John*, xvi. 7, 8, 13). "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (*1 Cor.* iii. 16). "If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit. . . . You were signed with the holy spirit of promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance" (*Gal.* v. 25; *Eph.* i. 13). "The Holy Ghost gives us the pledge of salvation, the strength of life, and the light of knowledge. . . . I may know the presence of the Holy Spirit by the change of my heart, when I see it become heavenly from being earthly, spiritual from being carnal (*St. Bernard*)."

FOURTH GLORIOUS MYSTERY—THE ASSUMPTION.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate, in this mystery, how the glorious Virgin, twelve years after the resurrection of her Son, passed out of this world unto him, and was by him assumed into heaven, accompanied by the holy angels.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O Most prudent Virgin, who, entering into the heavenly palace, didst fill the holy angels with joy, and men with hope, vouchsafe to intercede for us in the hour of our death, that, being free from the illusions and temptations of the devil, we may joyfully and securely pass out of this temporal state to enjoy the happiness of eternal life. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—PRESENCE OF GOD.—Frequently call to mind the holy presence of God. Do so at least before your principal actions. When tempted to sin, remember that God beholds you.

Aspiration.—“In thee, from thee, and by thee, are all things, O Lord.”

PATRON.—

See the Virgin Mother rise,
Angels bear her to the skies ;
Mount aloft, imperial Queen,
Plead on high the cause of men.

Son of Mary, &c.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

"Now it came to pass as they went that he entered into a certain town; and a certain woman named Martha, received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sitting also at the Lord's feet, heard his word. But Martha was busy about much serving. Who stood and said: Lord, hast thou no care that my sister hath left me alone to serve? speak to her, therefore, that she help me. And the Lord answering, said to her: Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her" (*Luke*, x. 33—42).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

"A throne was set for the king's mother, and she sat at his right hand" (*3 Kings*, ii. 19). "The Queen stood on thy right hand in gilded clothing. . . . After her shall virgins be brought to the king" (*Ps. xliv.* 10, 15). "Who is she that cometh up from the desert, flowing with delights, leaning on her beloved. . . . She that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun" (*Cant.* vi. 9). "A great sign appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars" (*Apoc.* xii. 1). "Let us all rejoice in the Lord, in honour of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary" (*The Church*). "The Holy Mother of God was exalted beyond the choirs of angels to the heavenly kingdom" (*Ib.*) "Mary as far outshines the martyrs in heaven as the sun surpasses the stars in brightness" (*St. Basil*). "As the light of the moon and stars is eclipsed by the sun when it appears, so does Mary's presence eclipse the glory of the blessed in heaven" (*St. Peter Damian*). "After God our greatest glory and greatest joy are from Mary" (*St. Bonav.*)

FIFTH GLORIOUS MYSTERY—THE CORONATION.

Meditation.—Let us contemplate in this mystery how the glorious Virgin Mary was, with great jubilee and exultation of the whole court of heaven, and with particular glory of all the saints, crowned by her Son with the brightest diadem of glory.

One *Pater*, ten *Aves*, one *Gloria*.

Let us pray.—O glorious Queen of all the heavenly citizens, we beseech thee to accept this Rosary, which (as a crown of roses) we offer at thy feet ; and grant, most gracious Lady, that by thy intercession our souls may be inflamed with so ardent a desire of seeing thee so gloriously crowned, that it may never die in us, until it be changed into the happy fruition of thy blessed sight. Amen.

LIVING ROSARY.

Virtue—CONFIDENCE IN MARY.—Have great confidence in the power and goodness of the Blessed Virgin, but remember that no one shall enjoy her protection who does not endeavour to imitate her virtues, particularly her love of God.

Aspiration.—“O Mary, my hope, I expect all good through you.”

PATRON.—

Mary reigns upon the throne
Pre-ordained for her alone ;
Saints and angels around her sing,
Mother of her God and King.

Son of Mary, &c.

GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

"After these things I heard as it were the voice of much people in heaven, saying : Alleluia. Salvation, and glory, and power is to our God. And a voice came out from the throne, saying : Give praise to our God, all ye his servants : and you that fear him, little and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunders, saying, Alleluia : for the Lord our God the almighty hath reigned. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give glory to him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath prepared herself. And it is granted to her that she should clothe herself with fine linen glittering and white. For the fine linen are the justifications of saints. And he said to me : write : Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith to me : These words of God are true" (*Apoc. xix. 1—9*).

AID TO MEDITATION, ETC.

"And the King loved her more than all the women, and she had favour and kindness before him above them all, and he set the royal crown on her head, and made her queen" (*Esther*, ii. 17). "Come from Libanus, my spouse ; come, thou shalt be crowned" (*Cant.* iv. 8). "I took root in an honourable people, and in the portion of my God his inheritance, and my abode is in the full assembly of the saints. I was exalted like a cedar in Libanus, and as a cypress tree on Mount Sion, like a palm tree in Cades, and as a rose plant in Jericho. In me is all grace of the way and of the truth ; in me is all hope of life and of virtue" (*Ecc'. xxiv. 16*). "What we read of Solomon rising from his throne, and making his mother sit beside him, was a figure of the honour and glory given by her Son to Mary" (*St. Bernard*).

CHAPTER XL.

THE LIVING ROSARY.

THE *Living Rosary* is a modified form of the common Rosary. It is in fact the same in substance with the other, and differs from it only in the manner of reciting it. Now-a-days, either from the pressure of business, as is often alleged, or from want of fervour, which is generally the true cause, comparatively few persons are to be found in the world who say the Rosary daily. The Catholic Church ever condescending to the weaknesses and wants of her children, allows the various mysteries to be divided amongst fifteen persons, who thus form a *circle* or *association*, each of them reciting every day that mystery which falls to his lot for the month.* This devotion originated at Lyons in 1826. The Blessed Virgin herself, it is said, inspired this abridged form of devotion to the same pious lady to whose labours we are indebted for another noble *Association*, that for the *Propagation of the Faith*. Though the Living Rosary has the seeming disadvantage (which has been made an objection against it)†

* “Who thus collectively weave together that flowery crown of exquisite devotion, the *Chaplet* (sweet old name, which we would gladly see revived), that decks at once the divine Son and the Virgin Mother—*Digna parens puero, digne parente puer*” (*Wiseman*).

† These objections are found in a little work written by a Dominican Father, and approved by the Master-General of the order (*Manuel Du Très-Saint Rosaire, par R. P. Pradel. Paris, 1862*), where it is also added that the authenticity of the Brief of Pope Gregory XVI. is not recognized

of mutilating and cutting up the usual Rosary, and favouring spiritual sloth, yet there is no doubt there are thousands, even in Ireland, who say every day one of the mysteries of the Living Rosary, who either would not or could not conveniently say the ordinary Chaplet. In the Brief of Gregory XVI. (the authenticity of which there seems little reason to doubt, from the very fact that this devotion is so widely spread and even so generally established, as it seems, in many churches, with the sanction of the authorities), it is called a *form of prayer most fit to honour her* (the Blessed Virgin) *in a holy manner in every place and time*, and a hope is expressed that it will not only become everywhere daily more frequent, from its being so easy, but also that having acquired in some sort increased efficacy from such a union of suppliants, it should be offered more agreeable to God, who, implored by common entreaty, is moved to commiseration and grace.* This holy

by the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences, and besides having no connexion with the order of St. Dominick, of which the Rosary is the inalienable inheritance, that it seems to fall under the prohibitions of Benedict XIII. and Benedict XIV.: "Ne eadem devotio (Rosarii) in posterū minuantur, Constitutionem Alex. VII. respectu, Rosarii Seraphici et aliam Clementis XI. respectu alterius confirmamus et innovamus, et in eis contenta quæcumque extendimus et ampliamus motu, scientiâ et potestate similibus, *ad cætera quæcumque rosaria de novo inventa et invenienda, sine opportunitâ prædictæ Sedis facultate, quibus Authenticum Rosarium Deo et B. M. V. sacrum, non sine Fidelium perturbatione antiquaretur.* Pretiosus, § 23. 2. Decret. Sollicita 7^o idus Julii, 1753, § 3, n^o 7."

* See *Manual of the Living Rosary*, which admirably sums up the many special excellencies of *this*, above the

exercise is called the Living Rosary, from the mysteries being represented by those who are to meditate on them, and thus render them in a certain manner *living*, by forming, as it were, a living expression of them in their hearts.

CHAPTER XLI.

ON INDULGENCES.

AN indulgence is the remission of the temporal punishment which remains due to sin after its guilt (and consequently the eternal punishment due to it) has been forgiven.* An indulgence, therefore, is in no sense a licence to commit sin, which God himself could not grant; neither is it a pardon of sin, which it supposes already forgiven; but is simply the relaxation of the whole or part of the temporal penalty remaining due. On this great truth—that a temporal penalty may, and generally does remain after the guilt is remitted—the doctrine of indulgences is founded. And this truth is evident from numerous examples in holy Scripture. In the sin of our first parents, we see them condemned to a temporal punishment after they were forgiven by God; first of all, the death of the body, which still remains, even after baptism. Again, omitting many others, Adam was told “Thou shalt eat

common Rosary—such as the union of a greater number in prayer, making them share one another's merits and prayers, &c. The additional indulgences are also there given down.

* Theologians add to this definition, “granted out of the sacrament of penance.”

bread in the sweat of thy face, *till* (therefore only a temporal penalty) thou return to the earth.”* We have similar examples in Moses and Aaron,† and in Mary, Moses’ sister. After King David had confessed and repented of the sins of adultery and murder, of which he had been guilty, the prophet Nathan declared to him on the part of God, “The Lord also hath taken away thy sin, *thou* shalt not die;” yet he adds: “Nevertheless, because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the *child* that is born of thee shall die” (2 Kings, xii. 13, 14); clearly showing that though God forgave his sin, he still required a temporal penalty. That David also was in hope that God would forgive him even that temporal penalty is plain from his own words: “Who knows whether the Lord *may not give him* to me, and the child may live?” The same holy king, for another sin he committed, “after the people were numbered,”‡ was given his choice of either of three temporal punishments which he was obliged to suffer, though the sin itself was pardoned. These, with many other instances, prove that God inflicts temporal punishment after forgiving the guilt and eternal punishment. On the other hand, the very fact of David expressing a hope that God might not require even the temporal penalty, shows at least that it may be remitted. In Numbers xiv. we read that God substituted a lesser temporal punishment for one more grievous on behalf of the Jews; after threatening

* Gen. iii. 19.

† Numbers, xx. 12.

‡ 2 Kings, xxiv. 20.

their immediate destruction, he forgave them by only excluding them from entering the promised land. The Church has received from Christ, and exercised even in the most ancient times*, the power of conferring indulgences.

Christ, in dying for man, offered a superabundant, even an infinite satisfaction to his Father for the sins of the world. To this infinite ransom is added, also, the superabundant satisfaction of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints ; and these constitute what is called the *treasure of the Church*. Now, it is by the application of this treasure, which can never be exhausted, that the Church grants indulgences, thus offering to God a more than ample compensation for the temporal penalties due for the sins of her children. This is the doctrine laid down by Pope Clement VI. in these words : ‘Jesus Christ did, by his superabundant holy passion, bequeath to his Church militant an *infinite treasure*. Committed by him to be dispensed for the welfare of the faithful by the hands of the blessed Peter, and his successors on earth, the vicars of Jesus Christ. In this treasure are amassed, also, all the merits of the Blessed Mother of God and of all the elect, from the first just man to the last.’ An indulgence may be either partial or plenary, according as *part* only, or the entire temporal penalty is remitted.

* See Council of Trent, which teaches that the use of them is *most salutary to the Christian people* (*Decr. de Indulg.*).

CHAPTER XLII.

ON THE INDULGENCE OF THE ROSARY.*

IN order to encourage the pious practice of saying the holy Rosary, most ample indulgences have been attached to it by several of the Roman Pontiffs—Sixtus IV., Leo X., Innocent XI., Alexander VIII., Innocent XII., and Clement XI. Benedict XIII., by a brief (*Sanctissimus*) dated 13th April 1726, granted, 1st. A 100 days' indulgence for each *Pater* and *Ave* to all who say with contrition the entire Rosary (fifteen decades), or the ordinary Chaplet (five decades). 2nd. A plenary indulgence, on any day they choose, to those who say daily, for a year at least, five decades, to be gained after confession and holy Communion. Pope Pius IX. confirmed these indulgences, adding, 3rd. An indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines to each person who says the Rosary in common with others. 4th. A plenary indulgence on the last Sunday of the month† to those who are in the habit of saying with others, at least three times a week, the five decades, provided on that Sunday, after confession and Communion, they visit a church or public oratory, praying there according to his Holiness' intention. To gain these, 1st. The beads must be blessed by a Dominican friar, or a priest having special faculties. 2nd. It is necessary to meditate on the Mysteries whilst reciting

* See the *Raccolta* and *Bouvier*, also *Il Rosario de Maria Santissima* (Roma, 1856). No particular form is prescribed in blessing the beads.

† Pius IX. *Ut Magis.*

the beads. For those who cannot meditate, it suffices to say it devoutly. Pope Pius IX., besides confirming the indulgences given by his predecessors, has granted, 1st. A plenary indulgence to all who say, at least once a week, the Rosary, or the Chaplet of our Lord, or of the Blessed Virgin, provided they be truly penitent, and have confessed to a priest approved of by the ordinary, and go to Communion on any of the following days, viz.: Christmas day, the Epiphany, Easter Sunday, the Ascension, Pentecost, feast of the most Holy Trinity, Corpus Christi, the Nativity, Annunciation, Purification or Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles SS. Peter and Paul, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, Philip, and James, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simeon, and Jude, Mathias, St. Joseph, and All Saints, praying at the same time to God for the extirpation of heresy and schism, the propagation of the Catholic faith, peace and concord among Christian princes, and the other necessities of Holy Church. 2nd. An indulgence of *7 years and 7 forty days* on the other feasts of our Lord and the Blessed Virgin Mary, to such as perform the aforesaid good works on these feasts; and *5 years and 5 forty days* to those who perform them on any Sunday or festival during the year. 3rd. A *100 days' indulgence* to those who are accustomed to say, at least once a week, the Chaplet, or Rosary, or Office of the Blessed Virgin, to be gained on the day on which they shall say it. These indulgences may be applied also, by way of suffrage, to the souls in Purgatory. In order to

gain these indulgences attached to Rosaries, Chaplets, &c., it is necessary to wear or keep some of them in one's possession, and to say the prayers prescribed at the time of wearing them, &c.; the indulgences do not go beyond the person to whom they are confided, or at least to those to whom he shall distribute them for the first time.

CHAPTER LXIII.

ON PRAYER.

PRAYER, which is defined by St. Thomas an elevation of the mind to God, is the most essential and important duty of a Christian—the very essence of the Christian life. It is the most necessary and infallible means of salvation, the ordinary channel through which God communicates his grace to men, the key that opens all the treasures of heaven. "For when prayer ascends," says St. Augustine, "the mercy of God comes down; high as heaven is, and low the earth, yet God hears the voice of man." Prayer is the universal law of the moral world, as much as attraction is of the physical world. Everything in nature prays in a certain sense. "For," as St. Augustine says, "prayer is the natural cry of a great misery to a great mercy;" all creatures turn to God as though asking him to supply their wants. "All expect of thee," says the Royal Prophet, "that thou give them food in season . . . When thou openest thy hands they shall all be filled with good."* Prayer is the first duty of

* Ps. clxxxiii. 27.

religion ; by it we believe in God, acknowledging him as Lord and Master of all—we hope in him, expecting from his mercy and goodness, that he will give us what we ask ; we love him, for we only pray to those whom we love, and who, we believe, love us in turn ; for what the apostle says, “ How shall they call *on him in whom they have not believed,* ”* equally applies to *him in whom they have not hoped, or whom they have not loved.* So that Faith, Hope, and Charity concur in the exercise of prayer. “ Hence,” St. Augustine says, “ what faith believes, hope and charity pray for.”† Prayer springs from faith as its root, it grows and increases in hope, and brings forth its fruit in charity. Prayer is the food of the soul, that sustains and strengthens it ; it is, in fact, to the soul what the soul itself is to the body, the very life that animates it, and the beginning of its *heavenly life.* “ He that knows how to pray well, knows how to live well,” says St. Augustine. Hence the encomiums which all the saints and spiritual writers pass on it. St. Crysostom calls it *the mother of all virtue and justice* ; St. Augustine, *the key of heaven* ; St. John Climachus, *the queen and mother, the food and source of every virtue, the handmaid of grace, and the unseen progress of the soul.* “ The soul that is not given to the exercise of prayer,” says St. Teresa, “ is like a body paralysed and crippled, which, though it possesses hands and feet, is unable to use them ; so that to leave off prayer seems to me,” she says, “ nothing less than to abandon the right way ; for prayer is

* Rom. x. 14.

† Enchir. c. 7.

the gate by which all the graces of God enter, and if this be closed I know not what other means they have of coming in." And all the saints speak in like manner of the Christian who neglects prayer—as a soldier unarmed, though always in the field ; a plant without nourishment ; a fish out of water, which, of course, soon perishes and dies. The necessity of prayer (which is unnecessary to prove, as it is taught almost in every page, especially of the New Testament) rests on these two truths of faith—the first is, that without the special assistance of God we cannot long persevere in his grace free from mortal sin ; the second is, that this special aid is usually given only to those who pray for it. "Ask and you shall receive," says our divine Lord, as much as to say, if you don't ask you shall not receive. " You have not, because you ask not," say the apostle St. James. Hence our blessed Lord tells us, " We ought always to pray and not to faint.*" " And these words are not a mere counsel, but a strict precept," as St. Thomas shows. With regard to its fulfilment, however, it may be understood in three ways, as the same saint teaches. 1st. As to the *act of praying*, and in this sense he prays always who prays at stated times and hours ; 2nd. As regards the *end of prayer*, which is that our minds may ascend to God, and in this sense a man prays always by directing (*ordinat*) his life and actions to God ; 3rd. As to the *cause*, for whilst one procures that others pray for him, he seems to pray, for instance, by giving alms to the poor, &c. " Shut up alms in the heart of the

* These words, while admitted to contain a precept, are variously explained.

poor, and it shall obtain help for thee against all evil.”* Prayer is a means equally infallible as it is necessary in obtaining divine grace, if it be accompanied by the proper conditions ; these are chiefly *humility*† and *confidence*‡, and *perseverance*,§ in asking, through the *name* and merits of our Saviour,|| what is conducive to our salvation.

CHAPTER XLIV.

ON MENTAL PRAYER AND MEDITATION.

MEDITATION is the reflection of the mind on the truths and mysteries of our religion for the purpose of exciting holy affections, and forming pious resolutions ; it is the attention we bestow on divine things in order to love God and to save our souls. Like the bees which perch on the flowers, to draw from them food and honey, the soul rests on the mysteries of faith and the truths of eternity, to derive from them the food and honey of divine love. “ How sweet are thy words to my palate,” said the Royal Prophet, “ more than honey to my mouth.”¶ The Holy Scriptures, the

* Eccl. xxix. 15.

† “ The prayer of him that humbleth himself shall pierce the clouds . . . God gives his grace to the humble” (Eccl. xxxv. 21 ; St. James, iv. 6).

‡ “ Ask in faith” (St. James, i. 6). “ All things whatsoever you ask *believe* that you shall receive ; and they shall come to you” (Mark, xi. 24).

§ “ Pray without ceasing, always to pray” (1 Thess. v. 17 ; Luke, xviii. 1).

|| “ If you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it to you” (John, xvi. 23).

¶ Ps. clyii. 103.

saints, and all spiritual writers unanimously teach that meditation is for all Christians the great means of loving God and attaining salvation. In fact, meditation is morally necessary, as vocal prayer is absolutely necessary, to lead a Christian life. Vocal prayer cannot supply its place, for without it vocal prayer will not make sufficient impression on the mind, and will be made badly, and therefore will not obtain its requests. "You ask and have not," says St. James, "because you ask badly." Meditation is the eye of the soul, without which it cannot see the way of salvation, the dangers that surround it, the enemies that lie in wait for it. He, then, who does not meditate, being ignorant of those dangers, will not ask the necessary grace, nor even think of avoiding them; not knowing his faults and defects, he will not apply the remedies to correct them. Hence it is to the want of reflection that the Scripture attributes the flood of vice that covers the world. "With desolation is all the land made desolate, for there is no one that reflecteth in the heart."* On the other hand it declares the use of this means as the sure antidote against sin. "In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin."† He who meditates on the law of the Lord is declared blessed; like a tree ever in bloom all his actions prosper before God. "Blessed is the man who shall meditate on his law day and night. He shall be like a tree planted near the running waters, which shall bring forth its fruit in due season, and his leaf shall not fall, and whatsoever

* Jer. xii. 11.

† Eccl. vii. 40.

he shall do shall prosper.”* “Meditation is the beginning and ground of all good,” says St. Augustine. Above all, meditation on the life and mysteries of our blessed Redeemer is the most profitable. “For by this means,” says St. Francis de Sales,† “your whole soul will be filled with him; you will imbibe his spirit and form your whole conduct after his example. He is the true light of the world; it is therefore in him and by him, and for him, that we are to be enlightened. He is the mysterious *tree of desire*, spoken of by the spouse in the *Canticles*; it is then to his feet we must go to receive the sweet air of piety, after our hearts have been infected by the contagion of the world. He is the true fountain of Jacob, the source of pure and living water, to which we must often have recourse to be cleansed from the stains of sin. You know how the little children learn to speak their mother’s language by listening to them as they lisp in broken accents; so shall we, too, by keeping close to our Blessed Saviour in *meditation*, and observing his words and actions, his motives and inclinations, learn by the assistance of his grace to speak, and act, and to judge like him, and to love that which he loves.”

Amongst many other encomiums and praises bestowed on the virtues of the holy virgin, St. Cecilia, it is said of her that she always kept the Gospel of Christ concealed in her breast; the meaning of which appears to be, that she had set apart from the life of Jesus, as related in the Gospel, certain passages which served the better to kindle

* Ps. i. 1.

† La Vie Dévote.

her devotion. On these she meditated day and night, with such attention and fervour, such ardent affection and delight, as to place them, as it were, enclosed in the sanctuary of her breast. "I advise you also to do the same," says St. Bonaventure,* "for I believe this the most necessary and the most beneficial of all spiritual exercises, and that which will lead you to the highest degree of perfection. For nowhere else will you find such a safeguard against the vain and fleeting pleasures of the world so strong a defence against tribulations and afflictions, and the temptations of the enemy, as in the life of the Lord Jesus, which was so perfectly free from the slightest defect or blemish of any kind. For by constant and habitual meditation on his life, the soul is led into a certain familiarity and love of him, so that it comes to despise and look on all things else as worthless ; it receives strength besides, and is taught what it ought to do and what to avoid.

CHAPTER XLV.

A SHORT METHOD OF MAKING MEDITATION.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF ST. LIGUORI.†

1. IN the preparation say : My God, I believe you here present with me . . . I adore you, I love you, I am truly sorry to the heart that I have so much offended you. . . . Give me light and grace to make this meditation well, to amend my life, and to advance in your holy love. Most Holy

* "Meditationes Vitæ Christi," c. i.

† Apparecchio Alla Morte (Roma, 1852).

Mary, my angel guardian, my holy advocates, assist me. *Hail Mary and Gloria.*

2. *In the meditation.* 1st. Represent the subject of it in your mind, and ask of God the fruit you wish to draw from it. 2nd. Reflect on it, and apply it to yourself, examining your defects and evil inclinations. 3rd. Make affections of gratitude and love, confusion and sorrow, desire and a purpose of avoiding some *particular* defect, of using *certain* means for this end, turning your heart by repeated prayers to the Three Divine Persons, to Jesus Christ, to the most Holy Virgin, your angel guardian, and holy advocates. 4th. In dryness and distractions it will be useful to call to mind the presence of God, to make the above-mentioned affections as well as you can ; to weigh the words of the *Our Father* or *Hail Mary* ; to say frequently, *Lord assist me to make this meditation well*, my Jesus mercy : and above all to offer several times the blood of Jesus Christ, in order to be delivered from *such* a vice, and to acquire *such* a virtue, divine love and perseverance.

3. *In the conclusion*, return thanks and examine yourself ; offer up your resolutions, and ask for the graces you stand in need of, saying : *Lord, I give you thanks for the lights and affections which you have given to me in this holy meditation ; I ask your pardon for the faults I have committed during the time of it ; I offer up to you the resolutions that I have formed through your grace, and I beseech you to give me grace to fulfil them perfectly, even to the hour of my death. This favour I hope for through the merits of Jesus Christ and the intercession of most holy Mary. Our Father, and*

Hail Mary. . . . “ During Mass, or at some other time, make a half-hour’s, or at least a quarter of an-hour’s meditation (for which there is a plenary indulgence every month, by going to confession and Communion within the month). Don’t omit meditation for any distraction, dryness, or occupation; you can make it even at your occupations; he who continues to make it will certainly be saved.”

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY EX- PLAINED.

THE word Litany is applied to express that public form of prayer and supplication made by the priest and people alternately, to implore the grace and mercy of God. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin is so called because in it we beg the grace of God through her intercession, which we invoke by addressing her under the glorious titles and figures which set forth her dignity and power. It is also called the “Litany of Loretto,” because it is sung in the celebrated church of Loretto, on all Saturdays and principal festivals of the Blessed Virgin. After the Antiphon, “We fly to thy patronage,” &c., we begin by invoking the three divine persons of the Holy Trinity, as the source and origin of every grace and blessing. We then turn to the Blessed Virgin, beseeching her under the various titles which belong to her, to pray for us and present our petitions to God. These sacred titles are of four kinds; the first class has special reference to her incomparable dignity as Mother

of God, which is the foundation of all the others. Hence she is called *Mother of Divine Grace*, her Son being the author and fountain of grace ; *Mother most pure, most chaste, undefiled, and inviolate*, to express the spotless purity of her who became a mother, yet remained a virgin ; *Mother most amiable and most admirable*, whom God hath loved more than all other creatures together, and who shall be to all nations for ever the highest object of love and admiration after her divine Son. The Second class of privileges is comprised in the first title addressed to her—“*Holy Virgin of Virgins.*” Hers was “a singular virginity,” which her maternity, so far from sullying has but honoured the more ; so that we may well doubt whether the maternity of the virgin, or the purity of the mother be more wonderful.”* This holy Virgin was adorned with all the virtues that became the spouse of the Lamb. She was *most prudent* on all occasions ; *most venerable*, her dignity and virtues being worthy the veneration of all mankind ; *most renowned and powerful*, for he that is all-powerful can refuse her nothing ; she is at the same time *most merciful*, for it was never heard of that any one had recourse to her in vain ; *most faithful*, believing what God had declared to her by his angel, “Blessed art thou that hast believed” (*Luke*, i. 45). The third class contains those mystical titles which show forth her exalted privileges. *Mirror of Justice* ; “she is the unspotted mirror of God’s majesty, and the image of his goodness” (*Wisd.* vii. 26). In her soul and in her actions,

* St. Bernard.

as in a mirror, all his virtues were reflected ; *Seat of Wisdom*, for the Incarnate Wisdom “hath rested in her tabernacle” (*Wisd. Eccl. xxiv. 12*) ; and she was filled with heavenly wisdom. *Cause of our Joy*, for she brought forth the Saviour, whose birth was the “good tidings of great joy to all the people” (*Luke, ii. 10*). *Spiritual Vessel*, truly vessel of election, chosen from the beginning, into which all the fulness of the Holy Spirit was infused. *Vessel of Honour*, exalted to the highest honour that God could bestow, that of being his Mother. *Vessel of Singular Devotion*, the hand-maid of the Lord, devoted without reserve to his love and service. *Mystical Rose*, like a lovely “rose plant in Jericho” (*Eccl. xxiv. 18*), sending forth a fragrance and sweet odour of virtue that filled the heavens. *Tower of David, Tower of Ivory*, “How beautiful art thou, my love ! . . . thy neck is as a *tower of David* . . . thy neck is as a *tower of ivory*” (*Cant. iv. 4, and vii. 4*). Her strength in assisting us was prefigured by the “*tower of David*, from which hangs all the armour of valiant men” (*Ib.*) ; her purity by the ivory. *House of Gold, Ark of the Covenant* : she was the true Ark, overlaid within and without with the pure gold of charity, containing not the tables but the Giver of the law—the “Mediator of a better covenant” (*Heb. viii. 6*). *Gate of Heaven*, the happy “gate through which all the just shall enter” (*Ps. cxvii. 20*). *Morning Star*, that ushered in the Sun of Justice, and shed the eternal light upon the world, Jesus Christ our Lord (*The Church*). *Health of the Weak*, for “he that finds me shall find life, and shall receive health and salvation from the Lord” (*Prov. viii. 35*). *Refuge of Sinners*, where, if they

only wish to amend, they are sure to find shelter from the anger of her divine Son. *Comfortress of the afflicted*; her heart, like our Saviour's, being a fountain of pity and compassion for those that are heavy-laden with the burthen of sin and sorrow. *Help of Christians*. This title took its rise from the signal defeat of the Turks by the Christians at the battle of Lepanto (1571), on which occasion it was inserted in the Litany by Pope St. Pius V., to whom the victory was revealed by the Blessed Virgin at the moment it was gained. The fourth series of titles displays her exalted dignity in heaven, where she is Queen over all the subjects of her Son, as far above them as the mother of the king is above the ministers of his court. She, too, like her divine Son, was desired by the Patriarchs, foretold by the Prophets; she instructed the Apostles; she was more than confessor and martyr, the Mother of dolours; she first raised the standard of virginity on earth, and leads the choir of those privileged to sing the *new canticle* of the Lamb in heaven. All the saints are indebted to, and owe their places in heaven to her after God. *Queen, conceived without original sin*, she was that pure fountain sealed (*Cant.* iv. 12) by the Deity—that garden enclosed, to which the serpent never had access, whose fair and lovely flowers were never sullied by his foul breath; of whom God himself declared, “Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is not a spot in thee” (*Cant.* iv. 7.) After this, we pray to the *Lamb of God*, who takes away the sins of the world, to spare and hear us, and have mercy on us, showing that all our hope of mercy and pardon is founded on the merits of his sacred *Passion* and death.

Litanie of the Blessed Virgin.

Sixtus V., June 11, 1587, granted to all Christians an Indulgence of Two Hundred days each time they piously recite the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary; which Indulgence was confirmed by Benedict XIII. (January 20, 1728).

ANTHEM.

WE fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God !
Despise not our prayers in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers, O ever glorious and Blessed Virgin.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven, *have mercy on us.*

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, *have mercy on us.*

God the Holy Ghost, *have mercy on us.*

Holy Trinity, one God, *have mercy on us.*

Holy Mary,

Holy Mother of God,

Holy Virgin of Virgins,

Mother of Christ,

Mother of Divine Grace,

Mother most pure,

Mother most chaste,

Mother undefiled,

Mother inviolate,

Mother most amiable,

Mother most admirable,

Mother of our Creator,
Mother of our Redeemer,
Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,
Virgin most merciful,
Virgin most faithful,
Mirror of Justice,
Seat of Wisdom,
Cause of our joy,
Spiritual Vessel,
Vessel of Honour,
Vessel of singular Devotion,
Mystical Rose,
Tower of David,
Tower of Ivory,
House of Gold,
Ark of the Covenant,
Gate of Heaven,
Morning Star,
Health of the Weak,
Refuge of Sinners,
Comfortress of the Afflicted,
Help of Christians,
Queen of Angels,
Queen of Patriarchs,
Queen of Prophets,
Queen of Apostles,
Queen of Martyrs,
Queen of Confessors,
Queen of Virgins,
Queen of All Saints,
Queen, conceived without original sin,

Lamb of God ! who takest away the sins of the world : *Spare us, O Lord !*

Lamb of God ! who takest away the sins of the world : *Graciously hear us, O Lord !*

Lamb of God ! who takest away the sins of the world : *Have mercy on us !*

Christ, hear us. *Christ, graciously hear us.*

Lord, have mercy on us. *Christ, have mercy on us.* Lord, have mercy an us.

Our Father, &c.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God !

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.—Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord ! thy grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may, by his passion and cross, be brought to the glory of his resurrection : through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ancient Litany of the B. V. Mary.

(Translated from the Irish of the Eighth Century.*)

On the 5th of September, 1862, our most Holy Father, Pope Pius IX. granted 100 days Indulgence (for saying the following Prayer or Litany of the Blessed Virgin, with a contrite heart), which is applicable also to the souls in Purgatory.

O Great Mary,
 O Mary, greatest of Marys,
 O Greatest of Women,
 O Queen of the Angels,
 O Mistress of the Heavens,
 O Woman full and replete with the Grace of
 the Holy Spirit.
 O Blessed and most Blessed,
 O Mother of Eternal Glory,
 O Mother of the heavenly and earthly Church,
 O Mother of Love and Indulgence,
 O Mother of Golden Light,
 O Honour of the Sky,
 O Sign of Tranquillity,
 O Gate of Heaven,
 O Golden Casket,
 O Couch of Love and Mercy,
 O Temple of the Divinity,
 O Beauty of Virgins,
 O Mistress of the Tribes,
 O Fountain of the Parterres,
 O Cleansing of the Sins,
 O Washing of the Souls,

* Professor O'Curry pronounces it "as old, at least, as the middle of the eighth century."

O Mother of the Orphans,
O Breast of the Infants,
O Solace of the Wretched,
O Star of the Sea,
O Handmaid of God,
O Mother of Christ,
O Resort of the Lord,
O Graceful like the Dove,
O Serene like the Moon,
O Resplendent like the Sun,
O Destruction of Eve's disgrace,
O Regeneration of Life,
O Beauty of Women,
O Chief of the Virgins,
O Enclosed Garden,
O Closely-locked Fountain,
O Mother of God,
O Perpetual Virgin,
O Holy Virgin,
O Prudent Virgin,
O Serene Virgin,
O Chaste Virgin,
O Temple of the Living God,
O Royal Throne of the Eternal King,
O Sanctuary of the Holy Spirit,
O Virgin of the Root of Jesse,
O Cedar of Mount Lebanon,
O Cypress of Mount Sion,
O Crimson Rose of the Land of Jacob,
O Blooming like the Olive Tree,
O Glorious Son-bearer,
O Light of Nazareth,
O Glory of Jerusalem,
O Beauty of the World,

O Noblest-born of the Christian Flock,
O Queen of Life,
O Ladder of Heaven,

hear the petition of the poor ; spurn not the wounds and the groans of the miserable. Let our devotions and our sighs be carried through thee to the presence of the Creator, for we are not ourselves worthy of being heard because of our evil deserts.

O powerful Mistress of heaven and earth, dissolve our trespasses and our sins ; destroy our wickedness and corruptions ; raise the fallen, the debilitated, and the fettered ; loose the condemned ; repair through thyself the transgressions of our immoralities and our vices ; bestow upon us through thyself the blossoms and ornaments of good actions and virtues ; appease for us the Judge by thy voice and thy supplications ; allow us not to be carried off from thee among the spoils of our enemies ; allow not our souls to be condemned, but take us to thyself for ever under thy protection.

We beseech and pray thee further, O holy Mary, through thy great supplication from thy only Son, that is Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, that God may defend us from all straits and temptations. And obtain for us from the God of creation, that we may all receive from him the forgiveness and remission of all our sins and trespasses ; and that we may obtain from him further, through thy supplication, the perpetual occupation of the heavenly kingdom, through the eternity of life, in the presence of the saints and the saintly virgins of the world ; which may we deserve, may we occupy *in sæcula sæculorum*. Amen.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE INSTITUTION OF THE "THIRD ORDER" OF ST DOMINICK.*

Dominick, in passing through Lombardy, had witnessed very mournful signs of the decline of the faith. In a great number of places the laity took possession of the patrimony of the Church, and under pretence of its growing too rich, everybody strove to plunder it. The clergy, reduced to a degrading poverty, could no longer provide for the magnificence of divine worship, nor exercise the duty of charity towards the poor; and heresy, which gave birth to this spoliation, now sprang from it in turn, as a means necessary to justify it. The Church could not be placed in a worse position than this. The possessions which it loses change the possessors into the most implacable enemies; error is transmitted as a condition of tenure, and time, which effaces all besides, seems powerless against this alliance between earthly interests and blindness of spirit. Dominick, as being the founder of a mendicant order, had a better right than anyone else to oppose so fearful a combination of evil. In order to resist it he instituted an *association*, to which he gave the name of *Militia of Jesus Christ*.† It was composed of

* *Vie de St. Dominique*, c. xvi. (*Lacordaire*).

† Historians are not agreed as to the precise time when the *Militia of Jesus Christ* was instituted. Some make it date back to the period of St. Dominick's stay in Langue-doc; others place it at the time of his stay in Lombardy. We adopt this latter opinion, which is founded on the most ancient authority respecting this subject (Blessed Raymond

persons in the world of both sexes, who bound themselves to defend the possessions and the liberty of the Church by all the means in their power. Their habit, which remained in the same form as that of people in the world, was distinguished by the Dominican colours—white, the symbol of innocence, and black, the symbol of penance. Without being bound by the three vows of *poverty*, *chastity*, and *obedience*, they partook of the religious life as far as possible ; they observed the watchings, fasts, and abstinences, and substituted for the recitation of the divine office, a certain number of *Our Fathers* and *Hail Marys*. They had a Prior of their own choice ; under the authority of the Order, they assembled on fixed days in a church of the Friars Preachers, there to assist at Mass and sermon. When Dominick had been placed in the rank of the saints, the brothers and sisters of the association took the title of *Militia of Jesus Christ and the Blessed Dominick*. Later still, the military element in this appellation disappeared with the public causes of combat, and the association remained consecrated to the advancement of the interior man, under the name of Brothers and Sisters of the Penance of St. Dominick. It was under this name that Munio de Zamora, seventh Master-General of the Friars of Capua, *Life of St. Catherine of Sienna*). We read there : “ This injustice reigned in many parts of Italy ; which the holy father Dominick witnessed with sorrow, so that he began to labour for the recovery of the property of the Church, though he had chosen extreme poverty for himself and his followers.” And further on, “ After the Blessed Dominick had regulated the Association in this manner, he departed to the Lord” (Part i. c. 8).

Preachers, confirmed it and modified its rules. The popes Gregory IX., Honorius IV., John XXII., and Boniface IX., granted privileges to it at different periods ; and Pope Innocent VII. approved of its rule, such as it was drawn up by Munio de Zamora. His bull is dated in the year 1406, and was promulgated in 1439 by Eugenius IV. The *Militia of Jesus Christ* was the *third Order* instituted by Dominick, or rather the third branch of the one same Order, which embraced in its fulness men, women, and persons in the world. By the founding of the Friars Preachers, Dominick drew forth the monastic phalanxes out of the desert, and armed them with the sword of the apostleship ; and by the founding of the Third Order he introduced the religious life into the very bosom of the domestic hearth, and even to that of the marriage state. The world became peopled with young girls, widows, and married persons, and men of every state, who wore in public the badges of a religious order, and conformed to its practices in the retirement of their own homes. The spirit of association, which reigned in the middle age, which is also that of Christianity, favoured this movement. In the same manner as one belongs to a family by the ties of blood, to a corporation by engaging his services, to a nation by the soil of country, to the Church by baptism, so, too, persons, by devoting themselves of their own free choice, wished to belong to one of these glorious *Militias*, which served Jesus Christ by the labours of the word of God and of penance. They were clothed in the livery of St. Dominick or St. Francis ; they became engrafted on one of these

two trunks, to draw life from its sap, while preserving their own nature entire ; they frequented their churches, took part in their prayers, aided them with their friendship, and followed as near as possible in the track of their virtues. It was no longer thought necessary to quit the world to be able to imitate the saints—every room might be made a cell, and every house a kind of *thebaïs*. According as age and the vicissitudes of life disengaged the Christian from the heavy burthen of the flesh, he sacrificed a greater part of himself to the cloister. If the death of a wife or child occurred to break up his family, if a revolution plunged him from honours to exile and destitution, he had another family ready to receive him with open arms—another city where he was offered the right of freedom. He passed from the Third Order to the completo order, as we pass from youth to manhood. The history of this institution is one of the most beautiful things that can be read. It has produced saints in all the ranks of human life, from the throne to the hovel, in such abundance as the desert and cloister might well show themselves jealous of. The female sex in particular have enriched the Third Orders with the treasure of their virtues. Too often linked from their very infancy to a yoke they had no wish for, they found escape from the tyranny of their position in the habit of St. Dominick or St. Francis. The convent came to them, when they were unable to go and seek the convent. In some obscure retreat of a father's or a husband's house they made themselves a mysterious sanctuary, all full of the invisible spouse they loved above all things. Who

has not heard St. Catherine of Sienna, and St. Rose of Lima spoken of—those two Dominican stars which have shed a lustre on the two worlds? Who has not read the life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, the Franciscan? Thus the spirit of God enters courageously on its work according to the circumstance of the times; it proportions its miracles to man's miseries; after having flourished in the deserts it blooms on the highways.* With the creation of the third order the career of Dominick came to its close.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE RULE OF THE THIRD ORDER.†

As no society can exist without some rule to regulate the conduct of its members, St. Dominick has laid down rules and statutes, by the observance of which, the members of the Third Order are enabled, whilst living in the midst of the world, to lead a truly Christian and pious life, and to imi-

* The third order counts amongst its followers, besides numberless persons distinguished by their virtues and noble birth, a great number of those whom the Church has placed on the calendar of the *Saints or Blessed*, such as SS. Catherine of Sienna, and of Ricci, St. Rose of Lima (called by the Church the *first rose of the western world*), and as some say, St. Louis IX. King of France, and Yvo, patron of lawyers, Blessed Albert of Bergamo, and more than fifteen others beatified by the Church, some of whom were of royal lineage.

† See *Manuel Des Frères et Sœurs Du Tiers-Ordre*, &c. Par Le Rme. Père, Jandel. Paris, 1861; also, "Manual of the Third Order" (Burns and Lambert).

tate in a certain manner the virtues of their divine Saviour and model. This rule was reduced to writing by Father Munio de Zamora, seventh Master-General of the order, at the request of the *sisters* in Italy. This rule, which St. Dominick prescribed orally, was divided into 22 chapters, and confirmed entire by Pope Innocent VII., by a bull dated the first year of his Pontificate, wherein the Pontiff declares, ". . . We wish and command that the same be observed inviolably by the brothers and sisters, both present and in all times to come." The rule and its confirmation were approved by Eugenius IV. Leo X. (in A.D. 1513) ordained that the brothers and sisters, living in continence or perpetual widowhood in the world, should enjoy all the graces and privileges granted by his predecessors to the first and second orders, and this was confirmed by the Council of Lateran (1518), and approved by a congregation of the Council of Trent, signed by Cardinal Pamphili. Pius VII. extended these privileges to the brothers and sisters who had the simple clothing, though secret, even before the usual profession.

The rule treats, in the first place, of the members to be received—those only whose *faith* and *morals* are beyond suspicion, such as live in charity with their neighbour, have paid all their debts, and made their last will; married persons cannot be admitted without the mutual consent of the other party (chap. i.). The habit consists of a tunic made of white, a mantle of black stuff; over these a leather girdle; the veil and bands of white linen, all in keeping with Christian modesty* (chap. ii.).

* The Sisters are accustomed to wear the scapular at present.

The place of reception is the chapter-room or before the altar, by the master, director or prior, who first blesses the habit,* and places it on the postulant, then entones the *Veni Creator*, which is continued by the others. Then is said *Kyrie Eleison, Christe Eleison, Kyrie Eleison, Pater Noster*, and *Salvum fac servum tuum, &c.*; *Dominus Vobiscum, Oremus, Deus qui corda, &c.*; *Pretende Domine*; to which all answer, *Amen*. The novice is then sprinkled with holy water, and receives the pax from the brethren† (chap. iii.). After the year of probation (or before, if it seem proper) the novice is professed after the following manner: “To the honour of the Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, of the B. V. Mary, and St. Dominick, I. [N.N.], in the presence of you Father, Master, and Prior [N.N.], of the Brethren (or Sisters) of Penance, of [name place] do profess that it is my will to live henceforward according to the rule and form of the Brothers and Sisters of Penance of Blessed St. Dominick, until death” (chap. v.). The members are to recite daily for matins the Credo and twenty-eight *Paters* and *Aves*; for Prime‡, Terce, Sext, None, and Compline seven *Paters* and *Aves*, and fourteen for Vespers. Instead of all these the office of the B.V.M., or the entire Rosary may be substituted, and the canonical hours by those who can say them. With those who are lawfully hindered the

* See Form.

† Numerous indulgences are granted to those who are buried in the scapular.

‡ The Credo is added at the beginning of Prime and end of Compline.

Prior, &c., may dispense or commute them into some other good work. For grace before and after meat, one *Pater Noster* is said. All rise (if not employed in manual labour) to Matins in Advent and Lent, and on Sundays and Feasts from November to Easter (chap. vi., vii.). All are to confess and communicate worthily, at least at Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, the Assumption, or Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. All are to attend diligently and in silence during Mass, the Divine Office, and sermon—when there is necessity they may speak in a low voice (chaps. viii. and ix.). The brothers and sisters must be careful to visit devoutly their *own parish churches*, to show reverence and contribute to the support of their own pastors ; they are to fast during Advent, from Quinquagesima till Easter, and all Fridays and fast days of obligation ; in any further austerity to be guided by their confessor (chaps. x., xi.). Except Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and feasts* of the order, they abstain from meat ; those who are ill or living with their families are exempt. They are to refrain from wandering curiously through the streets, and those wearing the habit openly, from public weddings, dances, &c. ; they are not to leave their place of residence without leave, nor are the sisters to go out alone ; the members are not to bear arms without leave and a just cause (chaps. xii., xiii., xiv.). When any one of the members falls sick, the Prior shall depute two of the brothers† to visit him, to provide as far as they are able for his corporal and spiritual

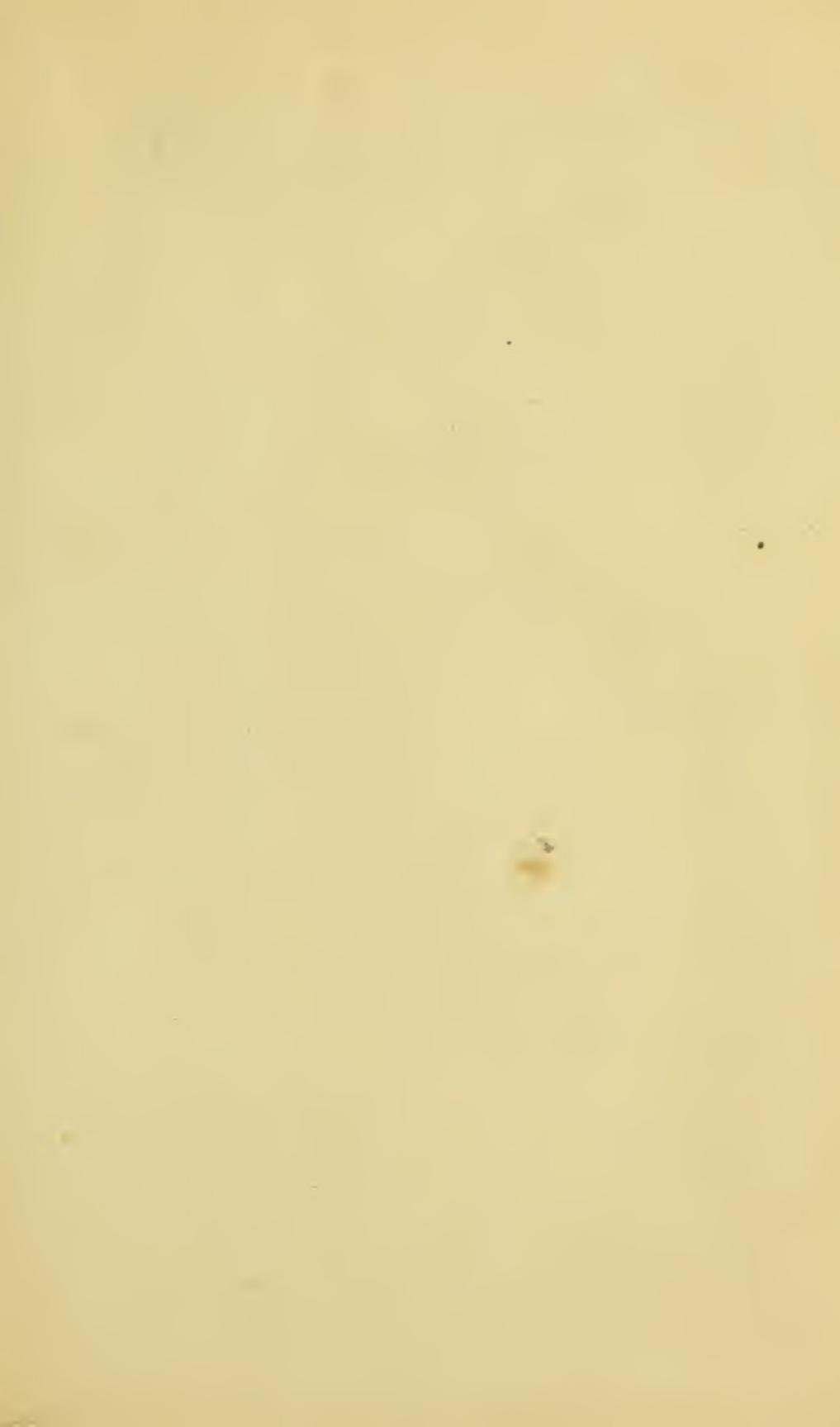
* Doubles.

† Or sisters, when any of them fall sick.

wants, exhorting him to receive the last sacraments when necessary. On the death of any of the brothers or sisters, the others are to receive information of it, in order to assist at the funeral *until* the body is buried ; during the eight days following each member shall say, if a priest, one Mass, if not, fifty psalms, if he know them, otherwise 100 *Pater Nosters*, adding the *Requiem aeternam* at the end of each, for the soul of the deceased ; each member is also to get three Masses said during the year for all the others, both living and dead ; those who know how, to say the entire Psalter ; those who do not, 500 *Pater Nosters* (chaps. xv., xvi.). On the death or removal of the Prior, a new one is appointed by the Master or Director, who shall consult with the older members for this purpose during Easter week, or some other time appointed. He may also appoint a Sub-prior, and confirm or remove them by the counsel of the Master and some (12) of the older members ; the same rule is observed as regards the Prioress and Sub-prioress. The Prior must attend to the observance of the rule himself, and correct or inform on those who transgress ; the Prioress, in like manner, who shall also visit the church, and guard against anything unbecoming in the dress or conduct of the sisters, especially their contracting familiarity with persons of the other sex (chaps. xvii., xviii.). If a member have already contracted such, if he do not renounce it after the third warning, he is to be excluded for a time, and if after this he still fail to amend, he is to be publicly expelled. Also if any one use insulting language, &c., to or of a fellow member, be guilty of

wilful lying, or disobedience, he shall be made fast, or punished more severely, according to his crime and condition; and if he refuse to submit, he is to be expelled. The same holds with respect to the sisters. All the brothers are to meet at a fixed time, and the sisters on the first Friday in every month, to hear the word of God and holy Mass, and receive correction for their faults from the Master appointed, and to hear the rule read; they are also to be entirely subject to the direction of the Master-General and Provincial of their order, as to what concerns their rule and manner of life (chaps. xix., xx.). The Prior may dispense with the brothers, the prioress with the sisters (also the Master and Director), and in case of necessity, &c., the members with themselves, from fasts and abstinences. Besides all are implicitly dispensed with when there is a reasonable cause (chap. xxi.).

Chapter xxii. declares, that the constitutions and ordinances of this rule oblige *under no sin whatever*, only as far as they express the commandments of God and the Church; the mere penalty imposed for any fault is to be accepted humbly and readily in a Christian spirit.





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